

JO'S OPPORTUNITY

· LUCY · C · LILLIE ·



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Jo's Opportunity

BY LUCY C. LILLIE

AUTHOR OF

"MILDRED'S BARGAIN"

ILLUSTRATED



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Dear Irene, Adelaide, and Dorothea Farquhar:—

Will you accept the dedication of "Jo's Opportunity" as my "amende honorable" for having used a name—now so dear to me—in connection with the terrible Bob and Betty of "Rolf House?" Had these characters come into existence in the summer of 1885 or in the winter of 1886, with which seasons, dear girls, you are so happily associated, I assure you they should never have so outraged a name that will be treated as it deserves if we ever hear what Nan did when she came into her own again.

Your loving friend,

LUCY C. LILLIE.

White Plains, N. Y., 1886.

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JO'S OPPORTUNITY.

CHAPTER I.

“**I** REALLY don't think you ought to do it, Faith.” Miss Justina Grace spoke from the parlor door. Faith was on the porch and Jo, barefooted, ragged, sullen and defiant, was swinging on the garden gate.

Now when Faith thought of Jo later she seemed to see her at different points of her career like so many pictures. This was really the first one, for while Miss Emerson had as a matter of course seen the girl's figure in the village, it was only when she was flying down some lane or roadway in pursuit of or from game as wild as herself—boys who had been tormenting her—the sharp words or blows of her old sailor grandfather, or running to be first in the boat which the children of the place sometimes got possession of for an hour or two. Once when Faith was sailing and a fog lifted for a moment, she had descried Jo in the same boat vigorously rowing to shore, but her chief impression then was of a pair of strong young arms, brown and firm, a

rough curly head, and bare feet pressed against the board in front of her as the oars dipped up and down with masterly regularity.

But this impertinent little figure, coolly swinging on the gate, presented to the young lady her first definite picture of Jo Markham.

A girl of perhaps fourteen, though not tall for her age—ragged and barefooted, as I have said—lifting from under an old straw hat a pair of gray eyes whose sullen stare made the saucy curve of her mouth seem a positively amusing contradiction. Wind and weather and all the suns of all the summers of her life had tanned Jo's skin to a healthy brown; and her rough locks seemed to have been tanned also, for here and there brown streaks showed in the darker masses. There was nothing pretty, nothing attractive, nothing even picturesque about Jo, and yet Faith could not agree with her aunt's opinion.

"You can't make anything of her," Aunt Justina went on in her placid tones, addressing her niece's apparently irresolute back. "It was foolish to have sent for the child. That was just like Kitty Barker." For it was Faith's friend, Kitty Barker, who had brought about this emergency. At the tea-table the evening before she had remarked:

"Faith I do *wish* you'd look up that unfortunate little Markham girl. Bertie says he *knows* something

might be done with her or for her. Do try it; she has resisted all the regular sort of Sunday-school people and things, you know, but it really would be worth while." And so suddenly this morning it had occurred to Miss Emerson to send for her.

"Just like Kitty Barker," proceeded Miss Justina Grace, "always discovering objects of charity for other people to attend to; but this child! oh, Faith, look at her now!"

For Jo, having taken off her fragmentary hat, was twirling and tossing it in the air, catching it with the greatest dexterity.

"Oh, Aunt Justina," said Faith softly, and trying not to laugh, "I think I *must* try it."

And accordingly she went down the garden walk and deliberately drew the gate towards her, with Jo still on it.

"I'm glad you have come, Jo," she said, as quietly as though she had made her arrival known in the most dignified manner. "Will you come in?"

Jo stopped tossing her hat, but the only answer the young lady received was a defiant stare.

"Get down, my dear, and come with me," she continued, pleasantly.

Jo waited a moment and then slowly descended from her perch and followed Miss Emerson at a slight distance, and with something still sullen in her manner, to

the side entrance of the house. The store-closets led off a narrow and pleasant corridor near by. Some wicker chairs were against each side of the wall, and as Jo hung back in the door-way Faith turned and asked her to sit down; but, although eying the chairs with evident admiration, she would not do it. The young lady disappeared into the cupboard and returned with a plate of apples, a good sized napkin and two knives, and putting on her most hospitable manner, went up to the little ragged figure saying,

"Suppose now, Jo, that you and I come out under that big tree there and eat our apples."

For an instant the expression of Jo's face changed to one of complete bewilderment. I have no doubt that sentence "*eat our apples*" was the cause. I believe Jo had never begged, but occasionally some charitable Philistine had given her something, offering it as though they did it because she looked in such deplorable want, but certainly nothing so sociable as this had ever occurred before.

Miss Faith preceded her to that part of the old garden where the trees are leafiest and shadiest and the grass if well veiled is warm. There were always some old rugs lying about. One of these the young lady spread out, comfortably sitting down and motioning Jo to do the same. Miss Faith was leaning against the ample trunk of an old tree, the red and yellow apples

on her lap, and her pretty brown hair catching new lights from the sunshine filtering from above her.

Jo in her uncouth way half sat half crouched on her knees and looked at this young lady in open-eyed wonder. Nothing about the really lovely picture appealed to the child especially; she did not even know that she was receiving a sort of humanizing influence, and yet in some fashion she was moved. She liked it. Perhaps she understood that it was pleasant to look at; for Miss Faith's figure in her white dress with all the little dainty girlish touches, her fair, pure, young face, with the candid eyes and firm though gentle mouth, certainly were the "pleasantest" things Jo Markham had ever seen.

"Take a knife if you like," said Jo's new friend, in an ordinary sort of way, "or else eat your apple just as you like." She handed Jo a nice one. "I like mine peeled," she continued, beginning the operation while Jo's teeth slowly fastened over a large bite, her eyes still fixed on Miss Faith. "It's easier to eat them that way."

Jo's teeth closed; the apple was *very* good, but it was clearly evident that the puzzling position she found herself in was what occupied her attention most.

"So you live with your grandfather, don't you?" said Miss Faith, not looking up; "don't you, Jo?" for Jo had only nodded in silence.

"Yes'm," the girl said.

"I wish I had known you before," continued Miss Faith. "What do you do all day?"

"Oh, nothin'!"

Miss Faith did look up now and laughed cheerfully.

"Why, you run about the beach I guess," she said, "and you go out in a boat sometimes; and don't you cook your grandfather's meals, and take care of his house?"

Jo nodded.

"Well I think that is a good deal to do. I wish, though, you wouldn't run about *quite* so much, Jo, because I'd like you to come to a little school I have."

The defiance came back, hardening Jo's face again.

"Don't want ter," she said, shortly; "ain't goin' to do it. I know that school, I guess; ain't you the one that has that little brown house upon the hill?"

"Yes," said Miss Faith, still cheerful. "Here Jo, do you like a red apple best?" and the young lady held out a new temptation.

"No," was Jo's curt answer. "I ain't agoin' to no school." She made a quick movement to rise, and then added, "what did yer want ter see me for, anyhow?"

Miss Faith put the apples down and stood up, Jo following her example sulkily.

"Why, Jo," answered the young lady, "I thought I'd like to have a talk with you, and perhaps there was something you'd like me to do for you. Don't leave

your apples. How many can you carry? I'll put them in a little basket for you. Let us go into the house."

As Faith accepted everything so completely as matter of course, she carried Jo along with her against the girl's will, and a moment later, entering by the side door, the two were crossing a wide, dim, coolly-matted hall, with pictures hanging on the walls, and where a beautiful oaken staircase wound away to the right.

Up this Faith Emerson in her white gown went easily, Jo's bare feet following with a degree of slowness they had never known before. When indeed before had Jo Markham been known to show submission or fear or hesitation?

CHAPTER II.

“THIS is my room, Jo,” said Miss Emerson, leading the way into her own beautiful room. Jane, Faith’s maid, sewing in the window, started up in surprise, but then she well knew her “young lady’s” ways with the poor. She knew enough to go quietly into the dressing-room, where in a moment Miss Emerson joined her, and a low-toned talk ensued. Jane went away, and presently returned with some garments, a trifle large, perhaps, for Jo’s lithe though not tall figure, but far more suitable than the rags the child was standing in.

Jo hardly knew how the process of re-dressing her was carried on, but it was when she beheld herself in the long pier-glass so entirely transformed that her expression for the first time showed absolute satisfaction. The latent instinct of the woman’s love of “brave attire” was roused.

Miss Faith rocked back and forth slowly in one of her pretty chairs while Jo’s survey of herself lasted.

“Now, Jo,” she said, “mind, I don’t give you those clothes just to make you feel you must come to my little school, but so that you may have nice enough

things to wear, and if you come up here to-morrow I'll help you make some other things.

Miss Faith paused a moment, struck by a sudden embarrassment in the girl's face.

"Perhaps," she said, "you would rather wear the old things home and take those with you?"

"Yes'm," answered the little vagabond, promptly. She hesitated, and then added, "they'd be after me down there, and we'd have a row about it."

"Who?"

"Those yer boys, and that yer Sandy Martin." Jo paused. "He's the *worst*," she added, vindictively. "He ge'me a black eye the other day, and I mean to pay him off, you can bet I do."

Jo pronounced Sandy's impending doom with a flash of her eyes and a tone that revealed much to Miss Emerson.

A friend of mine once said that she never knew any girl possessed of so much refined tact as Faith Emerson, and certainly she always shows it in her dealings with the poor; and with Jo Markham everything fine and delicate within her nature seemed always to come to the surface. These extremes meeting—by means of Faith's exquisite influence—always seemed to produce harmony.

Now she took no apparent notice of Jo's rough speech. Her aim was to make the girl at home and

free with her, reading in the keen young face before her a power of sullen reserve, a dogged self-will, that once roused, would be hard to combat. So, she only said,

"Well then, Jo, you can go into that other room there and put your own things on, and this afternoon I'll bring down these to you."

A little later, from the dining-room window Miss Emerson watched the little figure flying down North Street, in the direction of the lower end of the town, and recounted some of her experience with Jo to her aunt.

Miss Grace, was accustomed to her niece's independence of action and peculiar way of treating her pensioners, but Jo Markham was almost beyond her power of endurance.

"Never mind, auntie," the girl said, laughing, "we'll see what a little humanizing can do. I never *spoil* my protégées, you know that."

But as she was starting out in her little basket carriage, Jo's new garments tucked away comfortably under the seat, the last thing she saw was Miss Grace's solemnly disapproving countenance in the window.

Faith's carriage and ponies were well known all over the lower end of Ashfield, where she was acknowledged as a leader in many ways, for was she not young, independent of fortune, and blessed with as lovely a disposition as ever girl possessed? She and her aunt lived

by themselves in the large old-fashioned family house on North Street, but there were constant invasions of young cousins, or friends of all ages; one of the late Mr. Emerson's golden rules being that of generous hospitality to those who were worthy of it.

No one wondered when Faith stopped at one of the meanest houses in Sailors' Row and knocked at the door. The young lady's figure was too well known in any such place to occasion comment. A gruff voice said, "come in!" but Jo's grandfather, a disreputable looking old man, met her with what he intended to be a great deal of civility.

Jo hung back in a shamefaced way, while her grandfather thanked the "dear, good young lady" over and again, and blessed her in a fulsome manner for having taken notice of his granddaughter.

"She shell go to your little school, ma'm," he said; "I'll see to it she doos."

Faith said very little to the old man. She crossed the room to Jo, and in a low voice asked her to be at North Street early the next morning.

It was not very encouraging to leave Jo with a very sullen expression on her face, but Faith was—fortunately for her many charities—of a very hopeful disposition.

As she was driving down the wide village street, rather slowly, a tall, bright-faced lad of about seventeen stopped her with,

"Good-afternoon, Faith," and he came up to the side of the phaeton.

It was young Farnham, the "Bertie" referred to by Miss Barker.

"So you've done it," the boy said, with a pleased look—"actually taken hold of poor Jo Markham? Well, I felt pretty sure you'd do something."

Faith's eager assent was very pleasant to the lad. He thought her altogether the most wonderful person on earth, and was glad to be her right hand in any charitable project, however venturesome or hopeless.

He took the place she offered him beside her and listened eagerly while Faith recounted her experiences of the day.

"I've thought often and often I'd mention the girl to you," Bertie answered; "but I don't know how it slipped my mind. She is with such a rough set; but she is sure to be on the right side in any of the quarrels down in Sailors' Row. The other day she rushed into the middle of a fight, rescued a boy and a dog, and I wish you had seen the way she swept things to right and left of her."

Faith looked a little horrified; somehow she had not pictured Jo as a young pugilist.

"But there's a good sort of grit in her," the boy continued, "and you'll find it out."

CHAPTER III.

IT would be hard to say just what Jo Markham's feelings were the next morning, when, dressed in her new attire, she hurried along Sailors' Row, eager to gain the better part of the town before her rude assailants waylaid her. In her neighborhood a new bit of ribbon, some fragment of finery, a feather, a bit of lace, or a pair of new boots might be made objects of envy and admiration ; but by instinct Jo knew that a whole "new rig" would be hailed by her companions with shouts of derision, if not actually laid violent hands upon ; and Jo, usually fearless and bold as any of the rough crowd, felt for the first time in her life a dread of encountering ridicule—a shamefacedness different even from the embarrassment which had overpowered her in Miss Emerson's company. In her rags, with bare feet, with her old hat on her head, or the head bared to the sun or the wind or rain, she felt equal to any emergency which her friends might produce ; but now, as I have said, she felt her cheeks burn as she hastened by every quickest road or turning into the main street of the town.

Vague thoughts of Miss Emerson now began to find

breathing room in the girl's excited mind. Indeed, once the dread of "the boys" was over, she rather relapsed into her old defiant, careless self. She wondered *why* the young lady had done it and she smiled, remembering that phrase, "eat *our* apples." Jo had just enough sense of the ludicrous in her to think this was very funny.

She saw Faith's white dress under the trees as soon as she turned into North Street, and so approached with a little of yesterday's defiance.

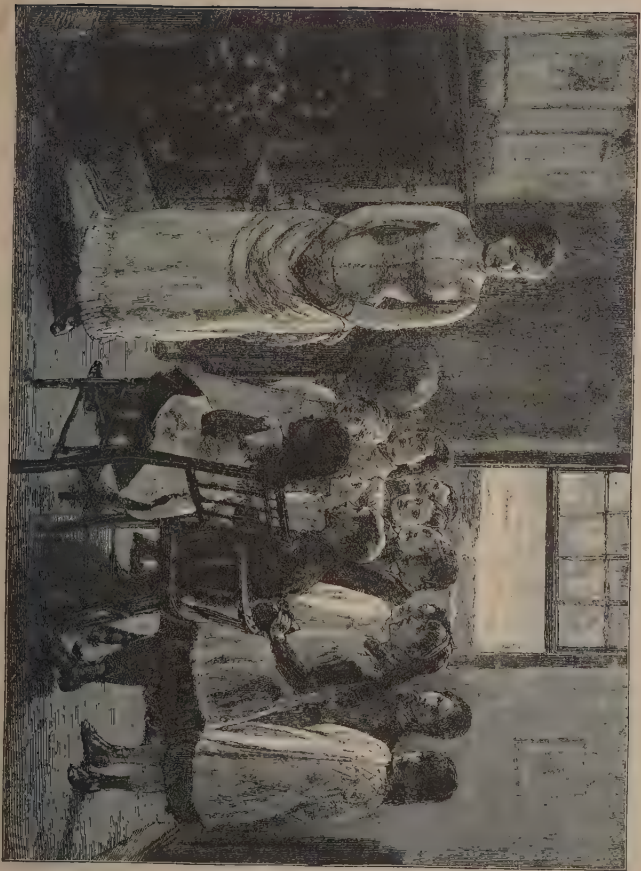
"Come in," called out Faith, cheerily—"in by that lower gate, Jo."

And Jo did as she was bid.

She found out that she did so all that morning. Miss Emerson took her down to the gray school-house, where there chanced to be no session that morning, and showed her where she could sit if she would come. It was a pleasant place near a window, with vines swinging outside, and the chair was cosy and inviting. One of Faith's ideas was to have no benches—nothing that would make her children feel themselves "classified."

"I want to make them feel themselves individuals," she had said to Mr. Benedict, the minister, when he objected to some of her notions. So every child had his or her own chair: sometimes they moved them about, sometimes they sat in little groups, or drew near to Faith's own easy-chair and pretty desk. In winter-time

“THE CHILDREN THOUGHT NOTHING SO DELIGHTFUL AS HER PICTURE STORY-TELLING.”



there was an open fire, and the children took turns in caring for it. The logs were in a pretty painted basket, and Faith let the boys bring her wood, for which she paid them in money and kind words.

Pictures hung about the walls—pretty colored prints, about which the children liked to hear stories. Faith let the “good” ones take turns in choosing a picture, and then she invented the story, pointing out the various points of illustration as she went along. One picture the children never tired of, and this represented a farm scene: some figures were coming down a long wintry road; lights burned in the house windows; some dogs were leaping joyfully about. How many stories Faith had told her children about that picture! Sometimes the figures were supposed to be weary travellers seeking shelter; sometimes they were the “family” returning home. Then the various rooms had to be pointed out, and a description of what was going on inside the house given. The names of the dogs were carefully selected, and the time of year vacillated between Thanksgiving-day and Christmas, for snow lay upon the ground and icicles hung from the trees. Altogether the children at Miss Emerson’s school thought nothing so delightful as her picture story-telling.

Mr. Benedict one day found Faith and her cousin Bertie engaged in this occupation, the children grouped eagerly about, animation and pleasure on even the plain-

est countenance. He listened with grave interest, and after that never objected to any of Faith's "peculiarities."

"I see what she is doing," he said to his wife that evening; "she is working those children up to all sorts of appreciations without their knowing it. Her kind of object-teaching is certainly a success." And thenceforward Mr. Benedict was Faith's firmest friend.

Jo stood still, looking about the room with a sort of sullen incredulity of expression.

"This ain't a *school*," she announced, suddenly, and flashed a defiant glance at Miss Emerson.

"Jo," said Faith, quietly, "this is *my* school. If you come to-morrow you will see the scholars and just how I teach them."

Jo made no answer, but moved about the room looking at one thing and another.

"Sit down in your chair," said Faith, cheerily.

Jo obeyed. For an instant she remained motionless, then she lifted her eyes to her new friend and smiled softly.

"Guess I'll come," she said, in a timid voice.

And quite early the next day Jo appeared.

Among the scholars were half a dozen girls and boys whom Jo knew, and at sight of them the girl from Sailors' Row shrank back, and but for Faith's uplifted finger and warning look she would have fled.

"Come in, Jo," said Miss Emerson, rising and taking the girl's reluctant hand. "Children," she continued, "this is my friend, Jo Markham. Jo," she persisted, quietly, "perhaps you would rather sit by me just now"—and before a word could be said Miss Emerson had drawn a low stool into the shelter of her secretary, upon which Jo, with a burning face, dropped precipitately. Faith pulled open one of the drawers of her desk and took out a bag of various colored scraps.

"Jo," she said, loud enough for every eager little ear to hear, "will you help me for a while with these? Will you pin together all the different colors? We will have to use them presently."

Jo raised her eyes.

Now it had never occurred to her that fun, or having a "good time," could be had in anything but her wild romping and playing, or fighting with the children of Sailors' Row. No sort of actual *amusement* had she ever known. Long ago, she remembered the joy of an old doll found in an ash-barrel, and she still treasured a box covered with shells which her grandmother had given her. But to find pleasure or amusement in anything like this, to know even that there *were* pleasures connected with anything so peaceful and simple, produced not only a sort of mental shock, but was a wholly new and confusing idea.

Faith knew just how it was. Although she under-

stood that Jo was different from any other child she had encountered, yet her varied experiences taught her that "beginnings were not to be made with books and lessons and much talking." Jo's first lesson was learned as she, with trembling brown fingers, sorted out the heap of pretty varicolored scraps.

The other children were having a little "talk" about geography. A map hanging on the wall was presided over by a tall boy, who pointed out the different countries as Faith's "story" went on. Then some questions followed.

"Jessie Duncan," said Faith, "suppose you wanted to go from England to France, how would you go?"

Jessie, a prominent pupil, answered, loudly,

"Across that channel, ma'am."

"And if you went to France, what people would you find?"

"French people."

"And in England?"

"English."

"Well then, tell me, how did those French people first come to settle in that country?"

And so on and on; the very simplest questions impressing the most important facts.

Sometimes Faith let her hand drop and touch Jo's curly head with a gentle stroke. It was her only acknowledgment of the girl's presence until the class was

over. Then she said to the new-comer, "How are you getting on, Jo?"

And Jo pointed in silence to her work. The little heaps were sorted, so far as color went, but in a very disorderly condition.

"Now, Mary Brown," said Miss Emerson, "I want to see if you know how to arrange these and pin them together."

It was her way of showing Jo how to do it, and Miss Emerson was rewarded for her care by seeing that Jo's eyes were keenly observant of Mary's work, and she even volunteered some assistance. Whatever the girl had dreaded from the first morning's experience certainly the reality was pleasant to her. Sitting on the little bench with the pretty calicoes and bits of gingham, she liked to hear the cool sweet tones of Miss Emerson's voice even though all the words were like Greek to her untutored ears and mind. She liked to be in such a bright room, and forgot that she had agreed to go fishing this very morning with Bill Tucker. Indeed Jo forgot a great many things belonging to Sailors' Row before school was over, before the children had trooped away, and she found herself alone with Miss Faith.

"Well," said Miss Emerson, "you did very nicely, Jo; now let us have a little lunch;" and forthwith Miss Emerson produced a tempting-looking basket, out of which she took sandwiches and cakes and apples, and with no

demur, apparently, sat down in one of the leafiest windows and ate her luncheon with Jo—Jo, the roughest, rudest girl in Sailors' Row.

But even Jo felt that there could be no approach to that familiarity which breeds contempt in this action. Gradually she found herself looking more and more at her new teacher; it seemed easy now to meet the glance of those sweet dark eyes, and Jo in a rough, blunt way began to talk. Before they parted Faith had begun to see a little into the girl's nature. Mind, heart, and soul were all unawakened, but it was by reaching the outer sensibilities of the girl first that Faith knew she would slowly find her way to those buried depths which God putting into every human being *must* have breathed into even this poor little wanderer.

CHAPTER IV.

FAITH met Bertie on her way home, or I had better say *he* met *her*, for Faith was walking with downcast eyes and a little, happy smile touching her lips gently. Bertie striding along North Street saw her far in the distance and read the meaning of her expression. He had seen Jo on her way to the school, and to tell the whole truth, had walked around the school-house unseen, and had taken a surreptitious glance at the teacher and her new pupil. He had seen Jo's eager though frowning study of the scraps, and he had seen Faith's slim white hand with the little hoop of pearls on it stroking the rough brown head just below her. The rest of the scene the boy knew well: the room with its happy though often unkempt occupants, the pictures, the fireplace, now full of apple-blossoms, and the clock ticking away in one corner. It was seeing and knowing and believing in his cousin that had made Bertie Farnham what he was, that was helping him towards much which he *might* be; and the lad, enthusiastic, chivalrous, tender, meant to keep his cousin's high, ennobling influence, and to deserve her faith in him forever.

As they drew nearer to each other Faith's smile deepened into a look of pleased recognition.

"All right, is it, Faith?" said the boy.

"Oh, *Bertie!*" was Faith's exclamation, with a long-drawn sigh; "yes, I hope so. Here, come in to dinner with us. I have been making believe eat my lunch with Jo Markham. There is Kitty Barker in the window."

When the cousins entered the house Kitty darted forward to meet them.

"Oh, Faith, you dear thing!" she exclaimed, rapidly, "Miss Grace has been telling me all you have been doing. Why, I verily believe you will reform that girl."

Faith felt somewhat annoyed to hear Jo spoken of in that way. She stood still before the hall mirror, untying the strings of her little bonnet and tossing aside the light wrap she had worn, before speaking. She could not respond with much enthusiasm to her friend's outburst.

"I don't know that she is so *very* hopeless, Kitty," she said, at last, trying to smile. "It seems to me that so far the only *hopeless* part has been the way we all neglected her. Now come in to dinner," she continued, smiling upon the young people, and leading the way into the luxurious dining-room, where already Miss Grace was waiting with just that touch of impatience in her manner with which she always greeted Faith's return from any charitable undertaking. Miss Grace

could not have said just what it was that annoyed her, for certainly no one could have been more entirely free from ostentation or foolish zeal in what she did than Faith Emerson; yet in the aunt's heart was always a desire to see her darling more luxurious in her tastes, more inclined to be a sort of princess than a little philanthropist in Ashfield; and the good old lady was apt to classify all charitable undertakings as so many obstacles in the way of social success.

Faith did not discuss either Jo or the school at the luncheon, and Kitty Barker readily launched off upon other topics—Ashfield festivities, tennis, lawn parties, all manner of amusements, in which she was just beginning to take a decided part. Half a dozen girls in Ashfield, of about sixteen years of age, like herself, were known as the "Buds." Faith was not very much older, but somehow no one would have dared to give her the title. Slight and girlish and fair as she was, there was a curious power about the young girl; something that defied anything unworthy a "little lady" always asserted itself subtly; yet there was fun enough and gayety, and that truest sort of joyousness—that which comes from a "soul at peace, a heart at rest."

Kitty delighted in being talked about by the boys in Ashfield as one of the "Buds."

"Fred Larcom is going to have a yachting party next week for us," she said, gayly. "I just heard of it at

Mattie Root's. Won't we have a splendid time! You will be there, Faith, of course?" and Kitty's little dainty eyebrows were lifted as she glanced at her young hostess.

"Oh yes," responded Faith. She was by no means above the ordinary enjoyments of youth, and all the little summer *fêtes* gathered their most direct charm and gained a certain force from her presence.

"Well," laughed Kitty, gayly, "with you with us we are sure to be proper."

Bertie began chaffing Kitty on her newly acquired rights as a "Bud," and declared that, on her account, he meant all the boys at the academy should adopt a pink rosebud for their parade *boutonnière* throughout the summer.

Between this and the day for the excursion Faith her hands full of many home employments. Some cousins from New York arrived — school-girls, who looked forward to the home in Ashfield as a paradise, an escape from a dreary school routine into something which meant all that was home-like and pleasant. With them Faith entered heartily into all sorts of summer fun and frolic. Two of her father's friends, passing through the town, spent a day. Then came an impromptu party for the cousins, and towards the end of the week a large and gorgeous circus came to the town.

I have never known definitely whether Miss Grace

knew how to account for the presence of some thirty young people, chiefly of the Sailors' Row district, who assembled in the circus grounds early, and entering took prominent and certainly well-paid-for places. Bertie distributed the tickets. Of course he had not pocket-money for such an enterprise; but Faith's eyes, meeting his, twinkled suspiciously during the performance, especially when Jo Markham's enthusiasm over the trained dogs knew no bounds, and Sandy Martin forgot to make himself disagreeable to his neighbors in gazing upon the feats performed by the gentleman with the balls and rings.

To see that company from Sailors' Row dash out upon the green where the tent had been pitched, dazzled, delighted, for once in their lives thoroughly happy, Faith declared at tea-time did her heart good; and when Miss Grace said it was simply *shocking* to see such a set of children attending the performance, Faith suddenly demanded one of her imperative "*whys?*"

Bertie said, laughing, "But, Aunt Justina, *we* need a wholesome amusement once in a while for ourselves, why shouldn't it be the same for them? Just because they are poor and can't buy the tickets for themselves, is that any reason some one else should not give them the treat? Do you know, when I have a whole Sunday-school under my control, I mean to have regular old-fashioned fun all around once in a while. Faith, I believe it helps the religious part along."

And Bertie reported later that all Miss Grace said in answer was, with a searching look upon Faith's merry countenance,

"I should not be at all surprised to hear that *some one* in Ashfield had bought those children all their tickets."

The circus had come and gone from Ashfield, however, and Bertie Farnham was going home, about nine o'clock, from his cousin's house, when he passed two or three of the men whom he had seen lounging about the tent doors. One of them was Sandy Martin's father.

The men were grouped against a railing on the cliff, and talking together in low, eager tones. As Bertie passed them by he caught part of a sentence which rather surprised him.

"He says the girl knows all about it," one of the men was saying. "The young lady has her up at the house all the time, and if she cannot help the job along—"

Then the words died away on the summer air. Perhaps they would have remained longer and with more purpose on Bertie's mind had not he and his comrades at the academy been so occupied at the time over the famous Barnabas "six-and-six" match, which always wound up the summer holiday. At all events, when they did recur to him, he wondered at his own stupidity.

CHAPTER V.

THE day of the yachting party was not as bright as the "Buds" could have wished. A thin fog gathered before they were well out; but the company was a very happy one, and bent on enjoying every instant. Faith was certainly in radiant spirits; she loved the water, and felt full of youth and vigor and happiness. Things seemed very bright to the young girl just then; it was impossible for her to doubt anything or anybody, so that it was a little jarring to have their chaperon, Mrs. Keith, pin her down in one corner and reprove her for "taking up" Jo Markham. Did she know the girl had once actually *stolen*?

Faith's lips curled slightly as she asked, briefly,

"When?"

"Last summer," Mrs. Keith said, as earnestly as she could, and manage her white silk parasol at the same time. "She was actually arrested for it."

Faith looked down at her gloved hands and said, presently,

"I will ask Jo all about it, Mrs. Keith; but even if

it *were* so, it would be an additional reason for my taking an interest in the poor child."

And the dark eyes, lifted tranquilly, challenged little Mrs. Keith to say anything further.

But all the party had reason to remember Jo that day. Not far from shore, but in a fog, they came to a stand-still. It was growing dark; the pleasure of the day was nearly ruined by the prospect of such an ending, and those whose spirits had been lightest sank to the ebb where grumbling comes in.

While the depression was growing general the sound of a horn suddenly reached them, blown somewhere not far off. It was answered in the best way they could contrive: then sounded the splash of oars; gradually out of the fog appeared the bow of a boat; then the whole boat defined itself, and finally Jo's figure, her strong arms working valiantly; but before any one spoke she called out, roughly,

"Got Miss Emerson there?"

Faith was at the side of the little vessel in an instant, and looking down, said,

"Why, Jo, yes—here I am."

"I'll row you back," was Jo's laconic answer. She rested on her oars and lifted her eyes to Faith's. Apparently she did not consider the fact that any one else was on board; but it ended in Jo and her boat being made most useful in conveying the party to shore, and

when once all were landed, and some one pressed forward in a conspicuous way to reward her, she flashed an angry look in return and said, brusquely,

“What do ye think I come around there for? I see your boat when I was out and thought like as not you’d get stuck, and I knew you had her—and that’s all I cared about.”

And angry, defiant, and rebellious Jo strode away in the direction of Sailors’ Row, leaving her passengers to laugh heartily over the scene.

All but Faith and Bertie.

The cousins exchanged looks as they walked up the road from the pier, a little behind the others. Faith was smiling.

“Ain’t people stupid?” she said to Bertie. “They judge of poor Jo by her blunt way—her rude speech, which in such a girl means just nothing at all. It actually counts for nothing, as it is what she has heard all her life; as well expect Kitty Barker to talk modern Greek because she was in Athens as to expect Jo to understand the commonest form of politeness in *our* language. That is what aggravates me so,” continued Faith, her eyes shining; “people insist upon judging a girl like Jo from their own stand-point. Now see here, Bertie”—and quiet Faith turned around, energetically facing her cousin with real excitement of voice and manner—“how *much* worse is it of Mary Leigh and

Kitty Barker to talk as they did to-day than for poor Jo to even fight those boys!"

"Of course," assented Bertie.

Faith walked along in silence a moment. She felt full of a righteous sort of wrath, and that she could vent her feelings to this devoted ally and confidant was a source of great comfort.

"Jo meant to do a real service, and it was *fine* of her—fine, I say—to refuse the dollar Mr. Larcom offered her. Think of all it would have done for her—and yet the girl was too *fine* to take it."

The result of all this was a more decided championship of Jo Markham than ever. Ashfield began to feel that Faith Emerson really was carrying her charitable enterprises a little *too* far when one Sunday she walked into church with the girl well dressed by her side, and entering the pew, handed her a book, and during the whole service kept tender watch of the uncertain little face and hands, the reluctant figure which looked ready to fly out any moment. It is true that Miss Grace was not with them. She had feebly and vainly objected to this open championship of Jo, and had pleaded a headache to escape accompanying her niece that morning, and Faith wisely forbore commenting upon it when they were dining at one o'clock.

These summer days when there was no regular Sunday-school Faith had her children for an hour in the

school-house, and this was Jo's first day of attendance, but in the middle of it she walked out, and of her own accord sat down upon the steps. She could not have said why, but she had a stifled sort of feeling that day. Her grandfather had been as usual with his most disreputable companions on Saturday evening, and the girl in terror had spent the night in a neighbor's attic, not sleeping but crouching in a window where she could watch the rickety dwelling her grandfather called home and seeing that he did not do anything very desperate. Fire was her horror, having gone through it once. Only her promise to Faith had made her dress herself in her "good" clothes and go with the young lady to church; but already, even though in a dull way, Jo was beginning to feel the effects of Miss Emerson's method with her—that she was a friend. Something of Faith's own purity and strength, her simplicity and straightforwardness, was reaching the other's heart, and although Jo could not have even defined it as an idea, there was a sense of room to breathe and move and grow and be restful in, when she was near to her protectress.

It was on the little back porch of the house that Jo sat. From there she could see the hilly slope green and warm, and the strip of beach, and the shining hazy water. The girl strained her eyes to look for the distant sails in the harbor across the bay. The one bit of sentiment or poetry or romance in Jo was her love of the

water, and the objects she had long known as moving upon it. Perhaps it was only an instinct or a craving after a freer life. "If I were a boy," she thought, "I would get on one of those ships and go sailing away and away and away forever. I guess I'll tell *her* that." She wondered how it would feel if you were very tired and laid right down in the water and got drowned. Fishes would eat you, Jo supposed. She remembered when Mark Welch was brought into Sailors' Row drowned. He certainly did not look particularly comfortable, or as though he had had a nice time in the water. But it would be cool and quiet anyway — certainly better than the dirty, crowded little kitchen, with her grandfather scolding and storming or beating her for everything.

From the open school-room door Jo could hear the children's voices rising and falling, not very tunefully, but the singing rather pleased Jo, although the words of Father Faber's hymn meant nothing to her.

"Joy, joy, the mother comes,
And in her arms she brings
The Light of all the world,
The Christ, the King of kings,
And in her heart the while
All silently she sings."

The words here and there rather caught Jo's fancy, and she began to beat time with her foot. She had no idea

that from her desk Miss Emerson was watching the tired little figure in the door-way whom she would not have disturbed for worlds.

The hour was ended, the children were preparing to depart when up the cliff came a boy's figure—one Jo knew only too well—that of her special tormentor, Sandy Martin. He approached executing one of his most warlike dances, and grinning derisively at Jo.

In an instant the girl's whole attitude changed. From one of listless, contented idleness or rest it was alert, tense, and defiant. Sandy represented Sailors' Row—all its cruelty, meanness and contention. Miss Emerson, the school-house, everything connected with her new life vanished in a sort of angry mist as the boy flung a taunting remark at her before he was on the top of the hill. He had been away lobstering for weeks. Now he had come back. Jo rose to her feet, and Sandy might have seen that her eyes and her attitude were ominous.

What jeers and sarcasms and taunts the boy uttered Faith never knew, but her first consciousness of his presence was seeing Jo in the heat of battle; hearing her, as Sandy drew back, with a derisive peal of laughter cry out,

"I *hate* you! I *hate* you! I wish you were dead! I hope you'll be dead, dead, dead, and that you'll be burned up! I wish I could kill you, and I would!"

The girl, with her great eyes full to the brim of burning unshed tears, stood out in a patch of vivid sunlight, drawn to her full height, her hands clinched, the impersonation of passionate vindictive rage.

Faith stood still in the centre of her school-room just long enough to comprehend the situation and to compose herself. Then she turned to the children, who were gazing upon the scene open mouthed and eyed.

"Go," she said, finally, with a queer little tremble in her voice. "Go, children, do not wait, if you please."

They drifted out of the other door and down the warm, dusty slope regretfully enough, for Jo Markham was a sufficiently interesting "character" to make them anxious to stay and see the result of this meeting with her well known foe, Sandy Martin.

Sandy, flushed, dogged and angry, was standing leaning against the side of the school-house when Miss Emerson's figure appeared in the door-way. He looked down sullenly, twirling his hat in his hand.

Faith could hear Jo's quick short-drawn breathing, but she did not look at her.

"Sandy," she said, quietly, "I am sorry you like to tease any girl. Now go away like a good boy; or stay, will you do an errand for me?"

The boy raised his heavy eyes a moment, and his lips seemed to try and form a "yes."

Faith turned hurriedly back to her desk, wrote a few

lines to Bertie, and came back handing the little note to Jo's tormentor.

"Please, Sandy, take that down to Mr. Farnham's and bring the answer back to my home on North Street.

The boy hesitated a moment, then snatched the note and darted off down the hill, sending clouds of yellow dust behind him.

Faith turned to Jo; the girl had begun to droop; she had her hands tightly clinched against her breast, and her eyes were fastened upon Miss Emerson with the look of some poor hunted creature, but the anger had not gone; the color in her face flamed, and Faith could see that her worst feelings still held her in their control.

"Jo," said Faith, gently, "come in here, dear."

The girl followed, and Faith sat down, not by her desk, but near the fragrant fireplace. Jo flung herself upon the ground and burst into a passion of tears.

Faith said to herself afterwards that it seemed to her as if the child were crying out the whole agony and cruelty and vindictiveness in her life. She neither spoke nor moved for some time; then, laying her hand on the rough brown hair, she said, quietly, "Jo, look up. Let me talk to you."

Jo started up, and resting on her knees stared at Miss Emerson, her eyes heavy with weeping, her face crimson and yet haggard.

"Jo," the young lady said, drawing the girl towards

her, "I *know* it was hard; I *know* how cruel Sandy seems; but then, my dear, you know we *all* must do our part. Jo, see here."

Faith had been very careful not to force any religious ideas suddenly upon Jo, but now a thought occurred to her.

"Jo," she went on, "I want you to look at that picture."

Jo raised her heavy eyelids and wearily followed the direction of Miss Emerson's eyes. They rested on a simple picture of our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. Faith, desiring a religious picture in the school-room, had chosen this one as the most appropriate for stories of Christ to her children. The silent garden, the divine heroic figure, the sleeping disciples—these gave her the theme she needed; and the children had learned to think of Christ as the Saviour who longed to be remembered and loved and appealed to. If *He* was lonely, tired, and forgotten, could he not understand the better our poor human desolation, our sadness and sorrowfulness? This is what had been in Faith's mind when she chose the picture; and now, taking Jo's hot hands in her own cool, tender ones, she said, gently,

"Jo, did you ever notice that picture up there? I want you so much to look at it, and let me tell you a story."

Jo drew nearer, though still in that half-crouching



"FAITH DREW THE GIRL'S HEAD DOWN UPON HER KNEE."

attitude and with the strained look in her eyes. Faith contrived to get her on a little footstool beside her, and then she drew the girl's head down upon her knee.

Nothing could have been more difficult in her dealings with Jo than to know just how this story should be told. At that moment the poor child was all roughly, coarsely, angrily, wearily *human*. Faith had to think of the best way to show her that Christ in His most glorious divinity was filled to overflowing with a knowledge of just such human needs as hers; that it was for such as her, poor Jo Markham, knowing nothing better than Sailors' Row could teach, that He had given us His life and His death.

But it was hard. Faith for some moments was silent; she stroked the brown head on her knee, and looked beyond it to the open door, the stretch of warm summer country, the placid, shining sea. Afterwards she used to think with a curious feeling of the convictions that came to her in that hour; that *she*, as well as Jo, had a "part to fill;" that for some reason her life-duties were growing clearer to her; and so, you see, Jo taught Faith as much almost as she was learning. The school-room, to Faith, never seemed quite the same after that afternoon. Perhaps there had been a slight touch of over-sentimentality in the way she had first gone into her work. The children had been fairly good. Faith liked surrounding them with pretty objects, idealizing their

dreary lives, which was all right and certainly had proved successful ; but now she had been brought for the first time face to face with something that was like a concentration of all the elements she had expected, and yet dreaded to encounter in her children. Jo, resting her head like a tired wanderer on Miss Emerson's knee, was terribly *real*.

CHAPTER VI.

FAITH could scarcely remember how she told Jo the story—the old and ever new one. The blossoms in the fireplace before them stirred softly from time to time as the faint summer wind came through the open doors, and outside there was the sound now and then on the road of some footfall going or coming. But otherwise no movement; nothing to break the peaceful stillness but Faith's voice, always a clear and sweet one, as she went on, leading Jo's mind carefully from Bethlehem to Gethsemane, from the scourging pillar, by that strange and awful road, to Calvary.

With the simplest words, dwelling on such points as would attract and hold the girl's untutored mind, Faith went on, and at last drifted into something sweet and gentle about Jo's own relation to her Saviour.

The girl had listened. How far it reached below the surface of her heart it was hard to tell, but that at least was stirred, and with Jo no feeling could be very light. Much of it Faith knew she understood, and at last she raised her eyes and said, gravely,

"Fer *me*, you say, Miss Emerson? He did it *fer me*?"

There was a queer mixture of gratitude and incredulity in her tone.

"For you and all of us," said Faith, quietly. "Now, Jo, *try* and ask Him to help you. You see He sent me because you need a friend. Perhaps, Jo, if you had known of Him sooner, and if I had been near you, you would not have thought of taking that fishing-tackle last year."

A burning wave of color swept across the girl's face; it almost seemed to enter into her very eyes.

"I *had* to take it," she said, looking down.

"*Had* to, Jo—what was not yours—what some one had left on the beach? That was stealing."

"Grandfather *made* me," she said, shortly.

Here was a key to much the girl was accused of doing, and it produced a new resolve in Miss Emerson's mind. Jo, she determined, should be her special charge, until at least old influences were forgotten in such new ones as she could bring into the girl's life.

There succeeded to this Sunday three or four of the scorching days which sometimes seem to blight the fresh loveliness of June, and Miss Emerson was confined to the house by a severe headache for two days. On the third a thunder-shower came up, one of those swift gales that shock the atmosphere completely before they cool it; and upon this followed a rain, heavy and drenching,

so that in-doors Miss Grace had wood-fires lighted and curtains drawn.

Faith had been thinking much of Jo and Sandy, fearful that the altercation of Sunday might end in something worse. She felt sorry to have seen nothing of her new charge, and wondered Jo had not appeared as she had promised to do; but could she have seen Sailors' Row at that moment her heart would have been very full.

Wind and rain were nothing to the inhabitants of that forlorn district. Sunshine, unless it meant heat, was welcome enough, though not regarded from any sentimental point of view, and except in cases of violent storm, they cared little for wet weather. The usual number of loungers about the tavern was rather increased by the excuse of a wet evening, and Jo's grandfather, although among them, did not see a little eager figure as it sped swiftly by the brilliantly lighted doorway, drawing a shawl closer about the head and shoulders, almost screening the thin, feverish face out of which Jo's eyes looked unnaturally large and bright.

For Jo had been ill. For almost the first time in her life the girl had been too ill to move about or work, or even romp on the beach, and tossing and turning on her little attic bed she had thought of Faith, of the cool, white hands, the soft, cheerful voice, with a longing to be near their owner once again. It never occurred to

her to send for Miss Emerson, nor did it seem unusual to go out in the storm. All she waited for was to make sure of her grandfather's departure for the tavern, and then, putting her "best" clothes on, she hurried out of the cottage and darted up the Row, heedless of everything but the attainment of her end.

It grew hard work towards the last, but the girl liked to feel the rain on her head and the wind across her hot cheeks, and the lights of the large house as she drew near it looked friendly to the poor child, who crept in by the side gate, and made her way around to the kitchen door.

Faith was sitting dreamily over the wood-fire in the library, now and then answering some remark of her aunt's, or stooping to take from the brass wood-basket a small log to rekindle the cheerful blaze, and give her fancies a fresh impetus. Everything about her was significant of warmth and comfort and luxurious content, and the young lady herself looked the impersonation of charming, happy, prosperous girlhood. The room, with its well-lined shelves, pictures, soft hangings and dainty bric-à-brac, seemed in keeping with her, as she with it, and the sudden appearance of Jo on the threshold of this inviting place was like a strong note of discord in the midst of harmony.

"Goodness!" ejaculated Miss Grace.

Peters, the careful butler, was just behind Jo, explaining, "She would come in herself, miss."

But Faith did not even hear him. She went swiftly forward and held her hands out to Jo with a charming smile.

Jo had never seen Miss Emerson at home in this way. The beautiful room with its candles and firelight, its many luxuries, bewildered her, and Faith coming forward in a soft white wool gown, with jewels flashing in a cross at her neck and in her ears, dazzled the girl so that she could not believe it was the same young lady who had talked to her on Sunday. But the eyes, the voice, the comforting white hands—these were the same. Jo lifted her haggard face pitifully to Faith's and said nothing; but Faith had already noted that the little brown hands in hers were burning hot, and that the girl was ill.

"Jo," said Miss Emerson, "I am glad to see you. Come with me, my dear. I don't think you feel well."

Heedless of everything else, Faith drew Jo along the hall to a little room with a matted floor and half worn old-fashioned furniture, where long ago Mr. Emerson's book-loving daughter had sat with him while he made his accounts or attended to farm business.

Peters followed respectfully and lighted the gas, while Faith bade Jo sit down in a great easy-chair and then drink the cup of warm tea she ordered Peters to bring, and which the child took with trembling fingers, trying to answer Faith's questions as to how she felt.

Long afterwards Jo Markham remembered telling Faith that she had been ill ; that her grandfather had been beating her ; that it was hot and stifling and full of noises down in Sailors' Row ever since Sunday. She remembered seeing the objects of the room grow more and more obscure before her eyes, until all that riveted her glance was the shining cross at Miss Emerson's throat. The stones seemed to flash out queer colors as poor Jo watched them. At last she ceased to see or think, and it seemed to her that for a time she forgot everything.

CHAPTER VII.

WHETHER it was one day, or two, or three, or a week, Jo never knew, that it seemed to her she was in a comfortable cool bed in a half-darkened room. She was sure that Faith was near her from time to time; she had pleasant things to drink, and some one turned her pillows and bathed her head, and a tall gentleman bent over her and held her wrist; perhaps she talked a little and answered questions or asked them, but of this she could not be sure. At all events, later, one still afternoon, she felt sure she was not in Sailors' Row. She opened her eyes and looked about her with real interest though with very little energy.

The room had windows on two sides, draped with pretty muslins; there was matting of red and white on the floor and a bright rug by the side of Jo's bed. Pictures hung upon the walls. There were the usual furnishings of a simple pretty bedroom, but to Jo's eyes it all seemed like something in a wonderful dream.

And the bed! The girl stroked the soft linen sheet with her hand, touched, half fearfully, the white coun-

terpane and the quilt of bright-hued cretonne thrown over her knees.

What had happened to her, Jo Markham, of Sailors' Row? Her thoughts were growing confused when she saw the door open on Miss Emerson's figure.

It was rather queer. Jo didn't know why she said it, but her first question was,

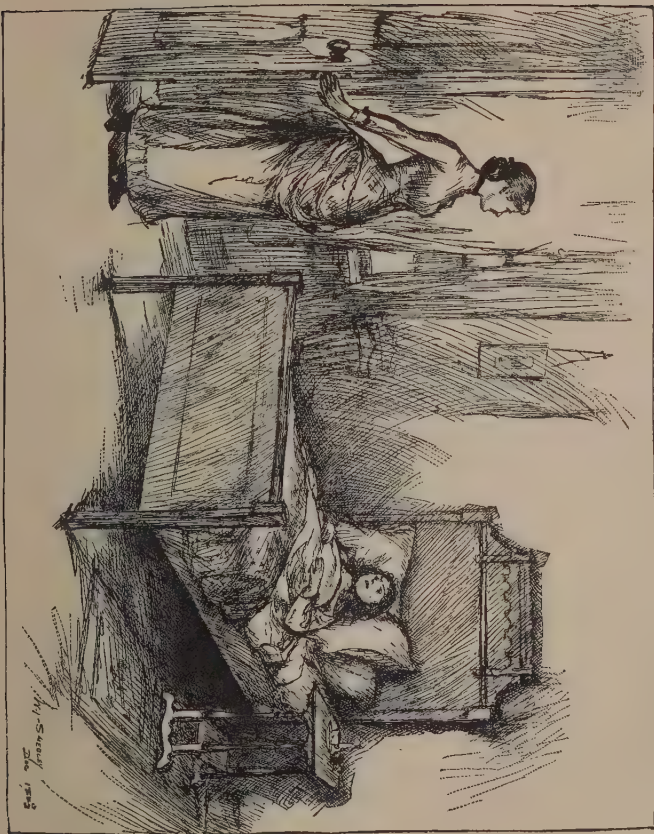
"Where's the cross you had on?"

Faith smiled with pleasure and went away, returning in a moment with the little shining cross in her hand.

"You may keep it by you if you like, Jo," she said, cheerily. "I am so glad you are better."

Then the young lady told her she had been quite ill for a few days, and she meant to keep her in North Street until she was strong and well.

Days, perhaps weeks, drifted by in Jo's life. Sickness, weakness, rest are great purifiers where there is tender care, and some strong heart and loving one to lean upon, so that, although she did not know it, those weeks did more for Jo Markham than a year of sermonizing and "reforming" by more active means would have done. The room where she was ill was in the top of the large old-fashioned house, and there was a wide hall outside, with windows at either end, in which, as her strength came, she walked about or sat down, sometimes alone, sometimes with Jane (Miss Faith's maid) sewing near her, and very often with Miss Emerson her-



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self. Jo never guessed the opposition that had been made to Faith's keeping her in the house during this illness, but the young lady knew it was her surest way towards Jo's salvation. Bertie "aided and abetted," and fortunately a well-filled purse came in very good requisition in such a case as this; with all that money could command, Miss Emerson had been able to contrive that Jo's illness away up-stairs should trouble no one. Company came and went as usual; if Miss Grace and Mrs. Keith deplored Faith's folly in half whispers to each other, it made no difference in the lively little lady's visits, nor in her encouraging Faith in various summer gayeties in which the "Buds" took happy part. Sounds of this other life down-stairs often reached Jo—music, singing, gay voices, the ripple of sweet laughter—but it all belonged to so entirely a different world from anything she knew about that the girl heeded it but little. Somehow she grew to feeling a delightful sense of possession in her room, in the wide, cool hall, in the comfortable chair placed in one of the windows, and the little low table where Jane put her tea for her, and where she had her books and some sewing. Faith was teaching her again, and she sewed from time to time on some garment for herself which Jane cut out.

The girl did not ask herself how long this charmed life was to go on. Perhaps if she had been stronger, the craving for out-of-door freedom would have over-

come the quiet, happy content of these days; so it was merciful that her weakness lasted long enough to give Faith the chance she so earnestly desired. Meanwhile Bertie and Miss Emerson had been making changes in Jo's old home at Sailors' Row. It was impossible to induce old Markham to leave there, but he permitted them to thoroughly clean and to a certain extent re-furnish the miserable dwelling. Jo's attic they made really comfortable with touches of decoration by some colored pictures from illustrated papers, with a hanging book-shelf, a nice little mirror and shelf below it, and strips of pretty carpeting on the floors. The windows were mended, curtaining put up, and all the various holes and cracks in the wall and sloping ceiling repaired.

"I'm preparing her for it all," said Faith to Bertie, one day as they walked home in the twilight, "teaching her to be neat, and how to use the sort of things she will find in her room. Jane has taught her how to make a bed nicely, and to dust the room, and I mean to have her come up once in a while and learn a little cooking from old Mary."

Jo had been two months at North Street before Faith talked to her of going home. She had grown so much stronger physically and mentally during this time that she was ready for the change, although it cost her a fit of terrible crying to think of leaving Miss Emerson and her happy room and hall-way, but Faith assured

her she should come there whenever and however she liked.

“We will always call them yours, Jo,” said Miss Emerson, during their last talk in the deep hall-window.

I think it was that evening that Faith noted many changes in the girl. There were touches of the old defiant look now and then, but the sullenness had vanished; the eyes softer and brighter, the lines about the mouth and chin indicative of her new-found peace and contentment. Something fine and approaching a certain rugged kind of nobility had crept unawares into Jo’s face, and the very tones of her voice betrayed the effect of her newer influences.

Altogether, it was a very different Jo Markham who returned to Sailors’ Row from the wild little anguished being who had rushed away that stormy night in June. Old Markham had been in a way by Faith and Bertie “bound over to keep the peace.” He was to be allowed two dollars and a half a week “for Jo’s board” as long as he treated her decently and allowed her to come to school and to Miss Emerson when she wished. Faith’s little half-weekly day-school stopped when the regular public schools opened, but she had three afternoons for talks and sewing, and early in the autumn she was to begin a cooking-class.

In this she had interested Jo keenly, intending to give her a position of trust as soon as it began.

Jo entered the altered house in the Row with a feeling of positive awe. The tidy kitchen, the rows of new pots and pans shining on a little oak-wood dresser, the stove, and new deal table and cane-bottom chairs, fresh whitewash, and a nice easy-chair for old Markham—all these wonders fairly transfixed her between surprise and delight. And up-stairs her own room! why it was just *next* best to the one at Miss Emerson's; and as in the dullest mind is some instinct for *home*, these new-found joys delighted Jo the more in that they were in the only place she had ever called her own.

"Now, Jo," said Faith, "all I ask of you is to keep it tidy. And you know for the next two weeks you must come up every other day to Mary, so that you will be ready to help me in my cooking-class."

I think Jo prayed that night from a very full heart.

CHAPTER VIII.

I WISH I could tell you all the story of that autumn and winter. It was a happy period for Faith Emerson. Happier still for Jo, whose mind, naturally active and eager, seized upon the new life with avidity; and if she failed many times in keeping her good resolutions, her temper, or her patience over work, still the result was largely in her favor; as Faith said to Bertie one winter's day, the credit side was far, far ahead for Jo.

The school did well, and Jo had a real talent for cooking. She enjoyed it, and having learned to read, was delighted by Faith's present of various cooking-books, which she studied with excellent results; really, as Faith told Miss Grace, showing common-sense, and uncommon aptitude for the work.

"And wouldn't it be worth while to make a first-class cook of her?" said Faith. "In these days, when so many girls starve in factories, or wear out in shops, or district school-teaching, I think to train up a cook in the way she should go would be delightful."

Sailors' Row thoroughly approved of Jo Markham's

launching out in this direction. Many times her services were called into requisition in the neighborhood where there was sickness or trouble, and some tired mother was glad to have help in her kitchen, especially after Jo's good cooking had once been demonstrated.

It pleased her. The springs of self-respect were touched at last, and Jo had an ideal, a standard, something she was trying to be or to do, which Faith knew was the greatest gain of all. She could no longer say "Who cares?" or "I don't care." "It's nobody's business what Jo Markham does." Faith slowly leading her to know that One greater than all others always cares, that she must care, and that Jo Markham was a responsible being who had something real to do, encouraged her in trying to make the very best of herself to herself. For we talk about being humble, and hiding our light, and not letting one hand know the other's deed, yet this is often misinterpreted or exaggerated.

It is a great help to *know* that we are doing right, to feel that we are "growing," and all of this can be encouraged without any fear that our right hand shall know too well the deeds of the left.

And at home things were better for Jo. Instead of blows and angry words, the worst she had to hear were the taunts and sarcasms of her grandfather when she came back from her frequent visits to North Street.

He upbraided her for making so little "out of" Miss Emerson.

"Anybody else 'ad be gettin' all your poor old grandfather wants," he would say, sitting in his chimney-corner and smoking the tobacco Miss Emerson supplied him with. At such times Jo's eyes would flash fire, and if she was at work the pots and pans would be rattled ominously.

With all the strength of her crude yet really deep nature Jo loved and revered Faith. It had taken months to bring her to this point of solemn devotion; but now the girl had reached a period where she could look back, and even though vaguely trace results back to their cause. She was beginning to know what Miss Emerson had done for her.

The winter wore away, like and yet unlike many others. It was nearly a year since Jo had sat swinging boldly on the gate at North Street, and Faith had said they would eat *their* apples under the tree.

"Jo," said Miss Emerson one morning, "why don't you grow taller? You are such a strong girl, too. You ought to be ashamed of being so little;" and as Jo by this time had learned to understand Miss Emerson's way of joking, she laughed merrily in answer.

"I know it, Miss Faith," she answered; "I wish I *could* grow tall."

They were standing in a side corridor back of the

store-closets. It was a sort of passage-way leading out one side of the house, to the main hall by one door and to the kitchen department by another. Shelves ran along one side of it, where Faith kept various jars of herbs and dried leaves, and such articles which, in her grandmother's day, had constituted a genuine "still-room" At the lower end of the little passage was quite a large window, overlooking a terrace. It was a sunny place in spring or summer, so that there Faith cultivated her first spring flowers.

Jo stood in the window looking down upon the June blossoms, and beyond them to the tree under which she and Miss Emerson had had their first talk.

How long ago it seemed to the girl. Perhaps Jo was, all unconsciously, "counting time by heart-throbs," as a famous poet once wrote, for you see until this year everything had drifted on with so little purpose in her life that months and years meant nothing, and in this one year she had grown as much in heart and mind and soul as many others would in ten.

And Faith looked at her with supreme content. Yes, she thought Bertie had been right — Jo Markham was "worth while."

"Miss Faith," said Jo, suddenly, "do you see what a loose fastening there is on this window?" She pulled it up and down as she spoke.

Faith scarcely heard the words, for at that moment

the cook appeared with some inquiry about a dinner-party Miss Emerson was to give that day. The cook's ears, however, were keener, and especially as Jo was no especial favorite with her—she, in company with the coachman, having decided that Miss Emerson wasted a great deal too much time and trouble on that "Sailors' Row lot," as they called Faith's humble pensioners.

"Yes, indeed, it's loose," said Mary, in an aggrieved way. "It'll have to be looked to."

And Faith remembered later that in a vague way she turned and watched Jo slide the window up and down.

That day Miss Emerson allowed Jo to remain and help in certain preparations for the dinner-party. It was quite a special occasion, being given in honor of Bertie's graduating from the Ashfield Academy, where he had come off with flying colors. Faith wanted to make as much of the event as possible; she looked forward to Bertie's distinguishing himself, and at least felt sure he would always do his friends and relations credit; but this day was in a fashion like the beginning of that future, and she wanted the lad to remember how kindly and hopefully all had wished him good-speed.

Jo enjoyed being in the beautiful dining-room with Faith, helping her to arrange the flowers, to train vines about the sideboard and above the pictures in the room, and to make a perfect bower of the door-ways leading into the library. How beautiful it all looked, thought

Jo, enjoying the pleasure which came from her newly awakened sense of refinement, and finer meanings in everything. Long afterwards she recalled the last few moments she remained that day with Miss Emerson. A half-uttered wish to see the young lady in her dinner-dress was enough to make Faith desire her to stay, and so the final impression was a happy one, of Faith in her dress of creamy white mull and laces standing in the square hall-way, where as yet no candle-light was needed; but even in the half-dusk Jo could see the flash of Faith's little shining cross, could see how fair and beautiful and tender was the face she had grown to love so dearly then.

"Jo," said Miss Emerson, with a bright smile, "you must come back early to-morrow and help me again, and I'll tell you a grand new secret I have for you."

The girl went away feeling as though it was worth something, worth anything, to try and be good and do all that she was bidden. Not a very brilliant mind was little Jo's, but it had its own keen and responsive corners, and all sorts of new impressions had been made there. She walked along the twilight streets happy and contented. Sailors' Row could never be inviting, but somehow she had learned to make the best of it, and she had a real interest in her own little house-keeping. The sunset had died out before Jo neared home, but there was light enough for her to see the kitchen win-

dows plainly, and, as she approached the house, to observe that within her grandfather had company. One of the windows was open, the summer breeze had caught the bit of muslin curtain and swept it outward, giving Jo, as she stood still a moment, a clearer view of the interior.

At a table in the centre of the room sat Job Martin, Sandy's father, and near him were two men whom Jo knew well—knew as her grandfather's worst associates. A low-toned though eager discussion seemed to be going on, the old man in his chimney-corner smoking and nodding his head from time to time with silent though evident approval.

Jo stood still with a sudden pang, a fear of what she could not say at her heart.

CHAPTER IX.

SOMETHING was going to happen: that the girl felt instinctively, but what it might or might not be she could not tell. As accustomed to the ways, the tones, the looks of the people in her own life as was Miss Emerson to those in *her* class, Jo knew in an instant that some evil was brewing; read in Job Martin's small black eyes, in Bob Tucker's satisfied leer, and young Ryerson's excited, flushed face, that a plot was being made which meant harm somewhere for some one.

Every one of the trio had been in jail time and again. Any more disreputable set of men could hardly have been gathered together, even in Sailors' Row, but of late, as Jo had been thankful to know, they had kept away at least from her grandfather's home. This made their present gathering there in force all the more ominous and significant.

The girl outside the window stood still, as I say, not knowing what to do, unable to catch the meaning of what they said, and yet the general drift reached her within a few moments. A plan was on foot for some

enterprise that night. The men moved, their voices were lowered, they were going away.

Quick as a flash Jo sped around to the other side of the house, waited till the shuffling, miserable-looking figures had gone down the hill, and then quietly presented herself at the door of the kitchen.

Old Markham looked up with the sort of growl which was his usual salutation to Jo.

"Been up with your fine friends, I suppose?" he said, sarcastically.

Jo was standing very still by the table, brushing off some bits of tobacco in a mechanical way, while she strove to feel composed enough to speak.

"Yes," she said, at last, and looking squarely at the old man, "I have been helping Miss Emerson; she has a big party to-night."

The old man gave a chuckle.

"Dear, oh dear!" he said, slowly shaking his head, "what a good thing it is for you to have such a kind friend. Plenty of money and jewellery and silver and everything, hasn't she, Jo?"

Jo had begun to rake the fire before making tea, and at this she flashed one of her old angry looks at her grandfather.

"What if she has," she exclaimed, passionately—"who has a better right to them I'd like to know? Who gives more to poor people, and—and everything?" con-

cluded Jo, breaking down—rather incoherently, it must be confessed—in her excitement.

“Dear me! dear me!” repeated the old man in a tantalizing way as he refilled his pipe.

Jo clattered about, setting the cups and saucers and the two plates down on the table with unusual vigor. She felt uneasy, perplexed, and troubled.

“Grandfather,” she said, suddenly, and again facing the old man with a determined air, “why did you have Martin and his friends in here? You know they’re bad men, and always up to some sort of mischief.”

Old Markham stared at Jo for a moment in silence. The fact was that he did not know exactly what to say. Jo, standing defiant, erect, and full of a righteous kind of wrath, was different from anything he remembered to have seen her. He hardly knew whether to be afraid of his granddaughter or not. Perhaps it would be as well to conciliate her a little.

“I’d know as they’re such a bad lot,” he said; and added, in a whining tone, “I should think you’d be ashamed, Josephine, to complain of your poor old grandfather’s hevin’ a little company now and then.”

“*Company!*” echoed Jo, with infinite scorn—“why, grandfather, what sort of company’s *that* crowd?”

But as the old man had relapsed into his most dejected and whining manner, Jo knew that further discussion was useless. She tried to eat her meal, but

“GRANDFATHER,” SHE SAID, SUDDENLY, “WHY DID YOU HAVE MARTIN AND HIS FRIENDS
HERE?”



the uncomfortable, restless feeling the sight of those men and their chance words had produced lingered, making it almost impossible for her to keep still or swallow a morsel of the bread and molasses which was her regular supper, and to which she usually brought a fine healthy appetite.

As soon as she had cleaned the table and put the kitchen to rights, Jo rushed up to her little attic to sit still and think what she had better do.

The words "*To-night's the best for the game*" had filled her with uneasiness; all her old knowledge of the ways and means of such men came back to her, and she felt certain that some bad deed was being planned. But of what use would it be to go to any one and report them? She could prove nothing; she could not even assert positively what she had heard them say.

Jo sat on the floor in her window, watching the darkness gather and the stars come out solemnly and peacefully in the summer sky. Looking up at those sentinels of God's gate-way, a prayer grew in her heart and found some sort of slow but earnest utterance upon her lips. She asked in her own crude though fervent way for help, for guidance, for *something* to do.

She longed to go up to Faith with this new anxiety, and yet she knew that she could not disturb the dinner festivity; that none of the servants would allow her even to send a message to their young mistress at such

an hour: meanwhile, as time went on and the evening was nearly spent, her dread began to lessen. It was ten o'clock before Jo made any effort to leave the window; all was silent below, although as she knew her grandfather had not left the kitchen.

Tired out with much thinking and with anxiety, Jo was about to move away from the window when suddenly down the slope at the back of the house came three figures—Martin, Ryerson, and Tucker. She knew them only too well.

They came along softly, and keeping close to the wall of the house, reached the door-way and went in. Jo rose to her feet with absolute control of herself, for she felt that there was something ahead of her which might require all her self-command.

The men's voices, low-toned though excited, reached her. She crept out to the narrow staircase and crouching down tried to hear what was said.

Not fearing Jo in any way, they had left the kitchen door partly open. Through it came the husky tones; words now and then struck her ear, but the sense of what was being said was difficult to catch. Jo waited motionless and almost holding her breath.

"One o'clock's time enough," she heard in a deliberate tone from Martin, "and we can lay low here until then."

One o'clock! It was not eleven yet. What did they mean to do? Where were they going?

"She knows the house well enough," came next from Ryerson, and then old Markham's broken voice, saying, "No, no, boys, she wouldn't help ye! don't you b'lieve it."

"Where is she now?" Martin asked.

"Sound asleep, I guess, but I'll go an' see."

And as Jo heard her grandfather's chair creak she fled wildly back to her room, and into the little bed in the corner, where, drawing the counterpane close to her chin, she closed her eyes, and tried to stop the quick breathing that terror and her sudden movement had produced.

The old man came up the stairs with a candle in his hand. Jo was motionless. He stood in the door-way a moment but came no farther, evidently satisfied that she was sound asleep, for an instant later she heard his slow, heavy step on the staircase, and then the voices sounded below.

She might have done something at once, but that suddenly one of the dizzy, faint turns which now and then came over the girl to remind her of her long illness at North Street forced her to keep still—to close her eyes, almost losing consciousness; and how long it lasted Jo could not tell. She came back as it were to her old vigor, roused by stealthy sounds below. The men were moving; they were going. Jo sat up, and gazed about her in a bewildered way. There was no

moon that night, but the starlight seemed singularly clear, and Jo could see some of the objects in her attic plainly. When she found her way to the still open window she saw that the three men were already outside the house.

For just one instant Jo hesitated. Then her resolve was taken, and stealing softly down the stairs she opened the old door, and with her eyes fixed on the dark figures moving ahead of her up the Row she crept slowly after them; now hiding for an instant in the shadow of that door-way; now standing motionless when their footsteps lagged, but always with her gaze riveted upon them, and with no sign of dread or hesitation in her slow and cautious steps. She believed she knew where they were going, and she could at least follow them.

CHAPTER X.

FAITH'S dinner-party for Bertie and his young friends was a decided success. Miss Grace thoroughly approved of her niece's doing all she could to honor the lad's successful school examination, and the hilarity of the party of young people was in no degree checked by the presence of Aunt Justina and Mr. and Mrs. Benedict.

Faith was in radiant spirits. When the company adjourned to the long drawing-room, and an impromptu dance was suggested, she sat down to the piano playing her gayest waltzes, and smiling approval at the boys and girls as they whirled past her.

"Won't you dance, Faith?" Bertie called out once, but Faith shook her head. She enjoyed seeing their amusement, and somehow, as she played the old airs she knew so well, she liked to *think*. The circumstances of her life had made Faith Emerson in some ways very old for her years at eighteen, and yet it was a child's heart in purity and simplicity that was beating that night happy measure in time to the joyousness and content about her. To-morrow her "children" were to

have their first exhibition. She could fancy Jo's pleasure on hearing what was in store for her.

And then suddenly Roberts appeared with a note. Faith stood up at once and opened it, for Roberts said the messenger was waiting with a carriage. It was from Mrs. Barker. Kitty was very, very ill. "Would Faith come at once?"

The little company broke up rather sadly, for of course Faith did not hesitate a moment. Indeed she waited only for wraps to be brought down to her, and in ten minutes was being whirled away in the starlight thinking how singularly the happy and the sad parts of life seem to meet each other. Kitty had not been well for some days, but such a change was the farthest from any of their thoughts. As the carriage turned in the gate-way, Faith saw lights shining in the upper and lower windows of the large house, of which Kitty was the only child. Could it be that merry, light-hearted, pleasure loving and good-natured Kitty was on her way towards that valley "where none need walk alone?"

Faith was met in the hall by Mrs. Barker's sister, who explained that Kitty had been begging for hours to see Faith, but knowing of the little dinner they had postponed sending for her; but now poor Mrs. Judson choked back her tears as she led Faith up the staircase softly into the sick girl's room. Whether the change that had come across Kitty's face were of death, or only



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“IT WAS FROM MRS. BARKER. KITTY WAS VERY ILL.”

suffering to be healed, Faith hardly knew, but a change was there, something that in all the girl's sixteen years of happy life no one had ever seen; it awed Faith not a little. She sat down near the bedside and took Kitty's little burning hand in hers.

So it came about that when Jo Markham, with every nerve keen and every feeling roused, was following the men towards North Street, Faith was watching at Kitty's bedside, a mile away from home, and leagues distant, so far as thought or dread of what the morning would bring forth was concerned. Seven o'clock had just struck from the little timepiece in Kitty's room when Mrs. Barker was summoned into the hall. Kitty was better, decidedly so, the doctors thought—better for Faith's presence, and perhaps really on the mend; so Mrs. Barker answered the call quite cheerfully. But in a moment she returned with an altered look and told Faith that Miss Grace was there waiting for her. Something had happened in North Street.

Faith was down-stairs in an instant; every possible dread seemed to rush across her mind before she reached the parlor, where Miss Grace, very white and tearful and agitated, was standing.

"My dear child," the old lady began, compassionately and nervously, "I know it'll be a dreadful blow to you—a dreadful blow—but you must bear it; and *remember*, Faith, I *never* thought you ought to have done it."

"Aunt," cried Faith, desperately, "what *do* you mean? what *is* it?"

"Oh, my dear," said the old lady, promptly, "that dreadful Jo Markham and a gang of men tried to rob the house last night!"

And having said this Miss Grace sank into the nearest chair.

Faith stood perfectly still. She was so long accustomed to self-control in the presence of her aunt, or when any emergency arose, that now she collected her thoughts after a certain fashion before she spoke, and yet afterwards she remembered the terrible sense of confusion that had oppressed her.

Jo—*her* Jo—a thief! Try to *rob her*! Impossible!

It was a lovely morning. All the fairness and sweetness of June seemed to flood the cheerful room in which Faith stood, still feeling as though darkness were around her as she tried to think what all this could mean.

"How do you know, aunt?" Faith asked at last, in a very cold, dull tone. She put one of her hands for support on a chair near her and looked at Miss Grace with a fixed gaze, "Tell me *just* what you mean."

But Miss Grace could not be coherent; all that Faith could gather was that about half-past one Roberts, hearing a slight noise in the pantry, suddenly remembered having left the old Farnham goblets out, and started down-stairs to put them away.

He was in his stocking-feet, and so made no noise in crossing the back hall towards the pantry. He turned the handle of the door leading to the little corridor where Faith had been that morning with Jo, and there, as Miss Grace said, tragically, "*He came upon them!*"

"Who?" demanded Faith, with trembling lips.

"A horrible man was just lifting that Jo in through the window," continued Miss Grace. "There was no question of what they meant to do; but, *unfortunately*, only the wretched girl was arrested; the men escaped."

"Arrested!" cried Faith. "Where is she?"

Miss Grace groaned.

"Safe in jail, where I hope she'll stay," was her answer. "You really must commend Roberts for the prompt way in which he acted, Faith. He did wonderfully. In five minutes he had sent for a policeman, and in half an hour the girl was in jail, and a search out for the men. One good thing she gave their names promptly enough, though she refused to say much more, but kept asking for you."

Miss Grace had opportunity to indulge in all the comments, criticisms, and opinions she liked on the drive home, for Faith was silent. She scarcely heard more than the sound of her aunt's voice as they were driven rapidly along, the sunshine and beauty of the morning seeming like a mockery to her. She was dazed and bewildered, and yet deep in her heart lay a conviction that

Jo was innocent. There *must* and there *should* be an explanation.

It seemed to Faith that she never could get home soon enough, and meeting the servants was a new trial, for all but her own Jane were loud in denouncing "that Jo."

Roberts' voluble explanations were checked by Faith's quiet way of bringing him right to the point in his narrative; but Mary, the cook, insisted upon reminding Miss Faith of the morning before when with *her own eyes* she see that Jo trying the window and saying how easy it was to go up and down.

"Easy indeed!" murmured Miss Grace.

Bertie was on the scene by this time, and when Faith had taken a hasty cup of coffee and put on her walking-dress she took him one side, explaining that she wished at once to go down to the jail. The boy, of course, volunteered to go with her, and alone they started off, Faith struggling hard to maintain the composure she had kept up before the servants and her aunt.

Bertie had to report that one of the men had been caught down near the marshes.

"It's that sneak Job Martin," Bertie said, indignantly—"the one that stole so much from the Sanford yacht two years ago. It seems, Faith, he has something pretty bad to say of poor Jo."

"Oh, Bertie," cried his cousin, looking at him ap-

pealingly with her eyes full of sudden tears, "you *can't* believe anything *really* against her yet!"

Bertie kicked away a pebble that lay shining in the road before him.

"Faith, my dear," he said, with a wise and unhappy look, "I don't know *what* to think."

CHAPTER XI.

ASHFIELD JAIL seemed to confront the cousins with something newly terrible about its heavy door and barred windows as they approached it; all Faith could think of was that somewhere behind those bars and locks Jo was imprisoned, and it almost seemed to her as if she could feel the girl's great wistful eyes fastened appealingly upon her.

But, in truth, at that moment Jo's eyes, tired, worn with passionate weeping and her long vigil, were closed in sheer exhaustion. The narrow cell into which she had been placed was very dark, in spite of all the wealth of sunshine lavished on the beautiful green earth that morning. She hardly knew how she had come there—where she was—but at every sound along the stone-flagged gallery outside she would start up for an instant, straining her eyes and her ears for the one step, the one voice, the one face she was waiting for.

They came at last. The key turned in the door. The jailer's voice said to some one outside,

“You can go right in, Miss Emerson.”

And Jo, standing up suddenly with a wild movement

of her hands and arms, thought light had at last come in upon her. Faith was there, not angry, not ready to cast her off, but with *her* look—the tenderness of her eyes just dimmed by pain or wonderment; but oh, Jo thanked Heaven, *not* turned away from her, *not* cruel or cold! And in another moment she was on her knees beside her, sobbing wildly and hysterically, and Faith's hands—just as they had long ago in the little school-house—were gently resting on her head.

For Faith, with her keen instinct, had resolved that, decide what she might, Jo should tell her story first. Two sides there are, there *must* be, to everything, and it is merciful that even when His creatures blindly see but one, God knows it all—balances, judges, and when it may be, forgives and leads back. Faith had no desire to exalt Jo nor to be weak with her, and yet she *knew* that in the case of this poor child, bred in the wretched ways of Sailors' Row, infinite tenderness and patience must lead the way to salvation.

They talked together a long time in low tones. Bertie, pacing the gallery outside, caught the murmurs of the voices and once looked in to see a picture he never could forget.

Jo, on her knees but leaning back, was gazing at Miss Emerson with imploring, eager eyes, her cheeks tear-stained and flushed, her hair in rough waves down about her shoulders; and Faith was looking at the girl

with something in the shining sweetness of her eyes and lips that made the boy feel as if he was in the presence of an angel. The dark and cold-looking cell made a strange background for this picture, which, years later, came back to Bertie Farnham's mind, helping him when he had chosen his life's work and was striving to do it well.

Faith joined him soon after this.

Jo had told her story, and Faith believed her, but just then it seemed wisest only to speak of it confidentially to Bertie.

Miss Grace was waiting in the library window for Faith's return, full of excitement, and yet, if the truth were told, a certain satisfaction from the feeling that at last Faith Emerson had had a lesson. Miss Grace approved of doing charity, but in a different way. At certain seasons of the year she would give out warm clothes, tons of coal, and soup, if necessary, but she never had much faith in trying to do anything with the hearts and minds and natures of "the poor;" whereas Faith went into it all eagerly, and so, thought Miss Grace, *over* confidently. Once the young girl had said, to her aunt's horror, that her "children" were like her garden.

"They want just what the flowers do, auntie—weeding and tending and nourishing; when I find one that needs the hot-house a little while I try and find a place

for it until it blooms, or if it needs a prop to learn how to grow I have to put in a stick and tie it up carefully."

Faith coming along the road with her easy, swinging gait, rather baffled and annoyed Miss Grace; why, the girl actually was smiling up into Bertie's animated countenance!

"Well, I never!" said Aunt Justina, springing to her feet. And Faith came in, still with the traces of a smile—perhaps a wistful one—lurking about the corners of her mouth.

It was rather hard upon poor Miss Justina to obtain no further satisfaction from either Faith or Bertie than their confident assurances that it "would all turn out right;" and to discover that Faith had arranged for Jo's temporary freedom, at least, was an absolute blow to the old lady. She was obliged to go across to Mrs. Keith and relieve her mind. Meanwhile, dinner over, Faith went down to old Markham's house in Sailors' Row.

Jo was at home, the old man, as usual, smoking in his corner.

At sight of Faith, Jo sprang forward and at once exclaimed to her grandfather,

"There, grandfather! Here is Miss Emerson. Now *won't* you tell her that what Job Martin says is a lie—that I was up-stairs all yesterday evening? *You saw me in bed!*"

The girl's voice was piteous, excited, and pleading.

The old man slowly removed his pipe, and looking with well-feigned surprise at his granddaughter,

"Josephine," he said, solemnly, "you'd oughter be ashamed to stand there telling those lies. I don't know nothin' about where you was last night. I was out fer a long walk."

Jo's eyes, strained and burning, turned from the old man's stony face to Faith's. A dull kind of despair began to creep over her.

"Mr. Markham," Faith said, in her gentlest tones, "remember that you are putting Jo in a terrible position. This man Martin asserts that Jo suggested the robbery of my house to them in a talk last night at your house. Now you *must* know and you *must* say whether this is true or not. You must know where Jo was during the evening."

But the old man had evidently resolved on his safest course of action.

"Don't know nothin' more'n I tell ye," he replied, again shaking his head sagely. "She might hev talked with them an' she mightn't. She ain't been such a dootiful granddaughter to me that I had oughter expect much good of her anyhow."

And no more would he vouchsafe.

Faith was frightened by Jo's strange looks when she



"JO DESCENDED FROM HER PERCH AND FOLLOWED MISS EMERSON."

left her ; just at the door the girl put out a shaking hand and said,

“ Will they put me *in there* again, Miss Faith ? ”

Faith paused a moment, and long afterwards regretted her next words.

“ Oh, *Jo*,” she said, piteously, “ what *are* we to do ? Nobody in all Ashfield will believe you, except Bertie and me—nobody, now that your own grandfather is against you ! If only you could live along so well and be so good they’d *have* to believe it.”

Jo was leaning against the wood-work of the old door, her face turned away from Faith’s a little, her eyes and lips composed, but terribly drawn and sorrowful.

“ No,” she said, in a slow, tired way, “ I suppose not ; there isn’t *any* one would believe me.”

She hesitated a very little, and then, wearily moving her eyes towards Faith’s, said, quietly,

“ I’m glad *you* do, and Mr. Bertie, and *I won’t forget it*. Don’t be *too* ashamed of me, if you can help it, Miss Faith.”

CHAPTER XII.

THERE was no such feeling in Faith's heart or mind as she moved away. Somehow or someway she meant to prove Jo's innocence, but just then it seemed hard to do it in the face of Ashfield's contemptuous pity and scarcely repressed satisfaction in the "exposure," as they called it, of that little hypocrite, Jo Markham.

Jo stood in the door-way some time after Faith's figure was lost to view. The smell of the salt marshes came up, mingled with the June flowers Miss Faith had planted in Jo's garden last year. Jo had learned to like it all—to like the mingling of spring odors with her garden scents; and now, as she stood there framing a resolve, she began in a vague way to wish she could at least remember all these things a long, long time.

As I have tried to make clear to you, there was nothing romantic or sentimental or even poetic about Jo; but something there surely was, strong and brave—something of a deep-heartedness which made her cling to what suggested the better, the purer influences of her life.

She did not return to the kitchen, but in a little while went up to her attic, and sat thinking—thinking and

"JO STOOD IN THE DOOR-WAY SOME TIME AFTER FATHER'S FIGURE WAS LOST TO VIEW."



planning. One thing grew luminously distinct to the girl. Miss Faith must not be bothered with her—must not be made ashamed of her; and then she remembered the sweet voice as it uttered those words, “*Nobody* would believe you, except Bertie and myself.”

When the twilight fell Jo moved about, and began with tremulous fingers to gather up a few of her belongings. Not a very large bundle was that which she made, for she would have to carry it, perhaps, many miles. She was at work in this way when she heard her grandfather go out, and at once she slipped down to the kitchen and hastily put up some bread and meat and cheese into a little parcel, which she carried back into her room, and then, before the darkness was absolute, she counted up the small amount of money she had saved—not quite two dollars; but to Jo it seemed a little fortune, and fastening it securely inside her dress, she sat down in the window of the attic, waiting for the last of the Sailors’ Row people to go into their houses for the night.

Her grandfather did not return. Jo was glad of that. Eight, nine, and ten o’clock at last sounded. It was a peaceful night, clear and starlight, like the one before it. Jo was thankful it did not rain, as, taking up her little bundle, she went down-stairs and softly out of the house. There was no irresolution in her movements. The plan, rapidly as it had come to her, was too well

laid for that. She turned her steps quickly in the direction of Ashfield Two Corners, which was a railway-station three miles from the town.

Whether she had any regrets, further than the agonizing one of leaving Faith Emerson, Jo scarcely knew. Her one thought was to leave Ashfield, where she would only make Miss Faith ashamed — where *nobody would believe her*.

Sometimes, as she walked along the country road in the quiet summer night, the girl lifted her face to the heavens, with their wondrous jewels, and tried to feel that she was not alone—to remember all that for a year past Faith had been so tenderly impressing upon her. Her old vagabond life, its freedom from restraint or fear, stood her now in good stead, since she had no dread of the long, lonely walk, no thought of doing anything unusual. But feverishly excited as she was, Jo began to feel the effects of the last two days before her destination was reached. It was rather a weary, drooping figure that at last climbed the steps to the solitary looking station, where the light of one kerosene lamp showed Jo that the place was entirely deserted. That some trains left there between midnight and morning she knew, and her plan had been to wait in the depot for the first one going out. It mattered nothing to Jo *where* she went so long as it was away from Ashfield.

The ticket-agent was not in his office, but Jo did not mind being alone in the little room. Putting her bundle on one of the benches she laid down, using it for a pillow, afraid to sleep and yet glad of even so poor a chance to rest.

Perhaps she dozed; at all events there seemed to come back to the girl some of the voices and sounds she had heard in the jail, and she roused herself with a start to find that she was not alone; three travellers had arrived; a stout, good-humored looking woman, with a delicate baby in her arms and a little girl clinging to her skirts, was seated opposite the bench upon which Jo rested. It was evident that they had just come in, for the good-humored looking woman was breathing quickly, and the baby had a suddenly roused or startled look as though something unexpected had taken place.

The woman looked with friendly eyes upon the little wanderer opposite her, and almost directly entered into good-humored conversation, explaining to Jo in the course of the next five minutes that she had been spending a week at a station beyond the Corners, and was going now to her home some fifty miles distant. It flashed upon Jo immediately that she might as well go to the same place, but she would not buy a ticket, thought the girl with the shrewdness born of her great anxiety lest thereby she might be traced.

Have I said that one of Jo's few "faculties" was for

"getting on," as the women in Sailors' Row called it, with children? children, that is, of her own class?

The little, rosy, chubby girl, clinging to its mother's gown, and regarding Jo with shy, half-laughing eyes, attracted her at once, and she involuntarily put out a hand beckoning the child over.

"Go, Rosy," said the mother, administering a little push; and looking at Jo she added, "You're going all by yourself, air you?"

"Yes," responded Jo; and while a burning color came into her cheeks, she added,

"I'm going to the same place you are."

"Well, *now*!" said the woman; "what for? To work I s'pose in the mills? Got any friends there?"

She asked these questions rapidly, but Jo had time for a moment's thought before she said, "Perhaps—no'm, I haven't any friends there—goin' just to try my luck."

"*Well*!" ejaculated the woman again. By this time Jo had little Rosy on her lap, and the child and she were soon talking in low tones.

The ticket-agent coming in sleepy and cross, suddenly roused the woman's activity, and she was soon at the window buying her ticket and having a great deal to say about how long it would take to go to Burnham. Jo listened, saw that she paid one dollar and a quarter for her ticket, and then putting the little girl down she stole out upon the platform to wait the coming up of the train.

CHAPTER XIII.

IT was four o'clock when the shriek, the glare, the sudden sense of confusion, announced the arrival of the train. Jo followed her unknown companion into the car, and when they were seated she said, a little timidly,

"Would you like me to hold the baby a little while? I'd just as lief."

"Well, there now," was the answer; "I believe you may, for I declare it's been a regular chore carrying that child down and havin' Rosy hanging on too."

Jo liked holding the baby; somehow it took away much of the sense of loneliness and desolation she had felt to have the little creature in her arms; and seeing that she made the child comfortable, its mother put her head against the back of the seat and placidly fell asleep.

The conductor by some odd chance overlooked Jo when he came around for tickets, and she was too unused to travelling to understand it, so it came to pass that when at seven o'clock the train stopped at Burnham, in the midst of a thin drizzle of rain, she found

herself still holding the baby, following her companion and little Rosy out on to the platform of the strange place, having made her journey in a dazed sort of way but at no expense.

"Where be you going to?" demanded the woman of Jo as they all stood still a moment.

Jo's eyes were fastened wistfully on the broad good-humored face before her.

"I've come here to look for work," she said, in a desperate sort of way; "an' I don't know where just yet."

The woman seemed to be lost in considering something for a moment.

"Well," she said at last, and briskly, "you want your breakfast, I guess, anyway, so you might as well come up to the store with me. There's the 'bus now."

And in a moment more the whole party were seated in the rickety old yellow stage and on their way to the village.

Jo looked about her, timid still and somewhat bewildered by the unexpected turn of events, and yet feeling in a vague way glad of so much friendly protection as the stranger and her little family afforded.

The omnibus rattled up along a marshy road, where the water came clearly in view, to a village street of good dimensions, wide and well shaded by tall old trees, with breaks here and there where some houses with gardens of their own stood somewhat apart from the rest.

Shops and one or two public buildings occupied the principal portion of the little street, and at angles roadways led in different directions. At the end of one of these lanes, as I might call them, a church with an old-fashioned steeple and a very old looking graveyard was standing on what seemed to be the brow of a hill.

It looked a pleasant place, Jo thought, watching her new surroundings with tired though interested gaze, but she was attracted chiefly by an old-fashioned brick house with a box-walked garden, where a maid-servant was busy scouring the front steps, and a bright-eyed old lady was looking out towards the sea.

The smoke of some factories dimmed the sky to the west of the village street, and as the stage turned down a side roadway, the quiet of the morning was broken in upon by the sound of their bells.

"Here we are," said Jo's new friend. "Now if I get out first you can hand me the baby and then Rosy."

The omnibus had pulled up rather suddenly in front of a small store of general articles, ribbons and laces and some simple dry goods sharing the honors of the large bow-window with some old ladies' caps and infants' hoods. A side door led into the house, and when Jo had followed her companion within it as she was directed, she found herself in a small square hall with a broad chubby-looking flight of stairs and at the lower end a window.

"Come right along," said the woman; "I guess Rachel ain't up yet. Rachel's my eldest girl," she explained, leading the way into a room back of the store, and which was a sort of general sitting-room, not overtidy it must be admitted, but looking to Jo very comfortable and home-like, for there was a long window with a deep sill overlooking a little garden, a big commodious sofa, besides an easy-chair or two, a sideboard full of china, and a table in the centre of the room with some books and sewing materials on it.

Back of this, and reached by means of two steps, was the kitchen, into which Jo followed her hostess, still carrying the baby who by this time was thoroughly fretful.

"There now," said the mother, sinking into a chair, "I declare I b'lieve that child knows more'n you'd think. Kep' up without a sound till it got home where it could cry comfortable."

Rosy evidently felt encouraged by this to try her own lungs, but an interruption luckily diverted her mind.

An old woman with a thin, puckered, and woe-begone looking face appeared in the door-way.

"*Well*, Mrs. Dawson," she said, in a very melancholy voice; "back, air you?"

"Yes, Mrs. Jones," was Mrs. Dawson's brisk response, "I am; and how've you and Rachie got on?"

"But poorly enough," was the reply. "Rachel's a sight worse than when you left."

Mrs. Dawson's good-humored expression faded at once to a look of genuine alarm.

"Worse? how?" she asked, sharply.

"Got a dreadful cold right on to her lungs," said Mrs. Jones, sitting down on the steps dejectedly. "I've been up the best part of the night with her, and I'm that tuckered out I must go home."

"Dear, dear," exclaimed Mrs. Dawson, standing up in a helpless way. "Here, my dear," she continued to Jo, who had been trying to quiet Rosy, "do you, like a good girl, take the baby while I have a look at Rachel. Yes, Mrs. Jones, go home and have a rest. I guess we'll get along."

Mrs. Jones needed no second bidding, but rose, and mournfully putting on her hat and shawl, was soon on her way up the street, while Jo sat alone with the children in the little kitchen wondering what was to happen next and where she could go. Her horror was of the jail—being put into it again and a second time having no means of escape—while her heartfelt longing and desire was to keep away from "bothering" Miss Faith.

She looked about the kitchen and longed to be able to remain there at least for a day or two. Perhaps if Mrs. Dawson knew how well she could cook she would keep her a few days; and the children—she might do for them as well. Many thoughts floated past Jo's tired mind as she sat in the kitchen-window, now talking in

low tones to Rosy or the baby, now turning her eyes to the gay little garden outside, where flourished many things such as she had tended at home in Miss Faith's garden as well as her own.

Ten minutes went by before Mrs. Dawson's step sounded in the corridor and through the little sitting-room, but she came in looking very much worried.

"I declare," she said at once, "I'd know what to do. Rachel's real sick—going to be laid up, I can see, with one of her regular colds; and there's breakfast to be got, and the children, and—dear me! dear me!" ended Mrs. Dawson in genuine distress.

"Please, Mrs. Dawson," said Jo, "couldn't I get breakfast? I can cook very well. I'm older than I look," the girl added, a sudden wistful pleading coming into her face as she spoke. "I'm fifteen and more; I can mind the children too."

Mrs. Dawson seemed pleased.

"Why, I'd know why you shouldn't," she said, more cheerfully, "if you can cook, and have a mind to try."

Five minutes later Jo was in possession of the kitchen; bacon frying on the stove, coffee boiling, while the little cook's attention was divided between these and the children.

The baby was mollified by a bowl of bread and milk, and Rosy evidently enjoyed watching Jo's performances, having been promised a good breakfast presently.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Mrs. Dawson came down-stairs again she found the table laid, and quite a tempting though simple breakfast awaiting her, and, as she seated herself and asked Jo to "draw up her chair," she complimented her on her "smartness."

"You say you want a place, do you," Mrs. Dawson remarked, presently. "Well, I should think you could get it. Have you any family up to the Corners, or friends?"

Jo hesitated, but her glance, fixed on Mrs. Dawson, was honest and clear.

"I haven't anybody in particular," she said, in a sad tone; "I'm an orphan, you see, and grandfather he's very old and feeble."

A long time after this Mrs. Dawson used to say she wondered how it was she never thought of asking Jo further questions as to references, or anything of the kind, such as she would have felt necessary with a Burnham girl who applied for work. But then, as she would explain, Rachel's being so sick, and Dawson not home from Newfoundland, and the baby cross, and the store

to look after—all these things unsettled her, and Jo seemed to “fall right in and take a hold.”

Why Jo did “take a hold” was later a source of wonder to the girl herself. But you see, in reality, it was her first emergency—the first sharp test of the powers Faith and she together had been developing; with all her heart she longed to hide herself and work her way, and when Mrs. Dawson suggested her “staying right on till she got a place,” the girl breathed freely, and thanked her new friend with humble gratitude. The thought of Ashfield, the memory of that terrible night, had grown dreadful to her; she was glad to be where no one would ask questions, nobody talk to her of those last days at home; and, luckily for her, Mrs. Dawson was likely, for some time to come, to be too much absorbed in her own affairs to trouble herself about Jo’s.

“I declare to mercy,” ejaculated Jo’s hostess suddenly that morning, “if I ain’t forgot to ask for your name!”

Jo was washing the dishes. Her back was turned to Mrs. Dawson, and she had time for a moment’s thought before answering. Jo knew what no one else in Ashfield did, and what never had seemed of the least consequence before, that her real name was Brooke, and not Markham, the old man being her mother’s father; but Sailors’ Row had not time to make such useless distinctions. As “Markham’s girl” Jo had grown up, and

as "Jo Markham" she had been quite satisfied to be known.

But now, suddenly, the girl realized that her real name would be of service. Josephine Mary Brooke she had been christened fifteen years ago. Blessed chance that had put Mary into the name of the little baby who had—though she knew it not—been for one year welcome, well-treated, and well-cared for! Her name had been, as I say, of no consequence to her whatever, although she had seen it scores of times written in the old Bible which her grandfather kept in the upper drawer of the kitchen dresser. It was her mother's name, and in a pretty school-girlish hand it had been written on the fly-leaf—"Josephine Mary Brooke."

"Everything's so upset," Mrs. Dawson continued, stirring the gruel for her sick daughter, "I never thought to ask you—"

"My name?" said Jo, a little faintly; "Mary Brooke, ma'am."

"Brooke or Brooks?" said Mrs. Dawson, sharply. "Brooks is a deal easier to say—comes sort o' more natural; but still Mary's a handy enough name, too, when you once get at it. I do hate these names that takes your time all up and leave nothing for what you've got to say afterwards. There's Dawson—he's Zachariah. Well, I declare to January, by the time I've got it out full, as I do sometimes—the hull Zachariah—

he's up and away out of the front door, and like as not, when he comes in again, I've clear forgot what I meant to follow it up with. So, as a general thing, it's 'Zack' or 'Dawson' when there's somethin' pressin' on me to say. I named that there baby Jo just for no other reason in the world than to save trouble when she was a-growing up. 'Tain't Josephine nor Joanna; no, Jo, nothin' only just Jo. She kin settle on to something for herself when she's older, if she likes, and has friends with time enough to give her a full, long-legged, spelled-out name."

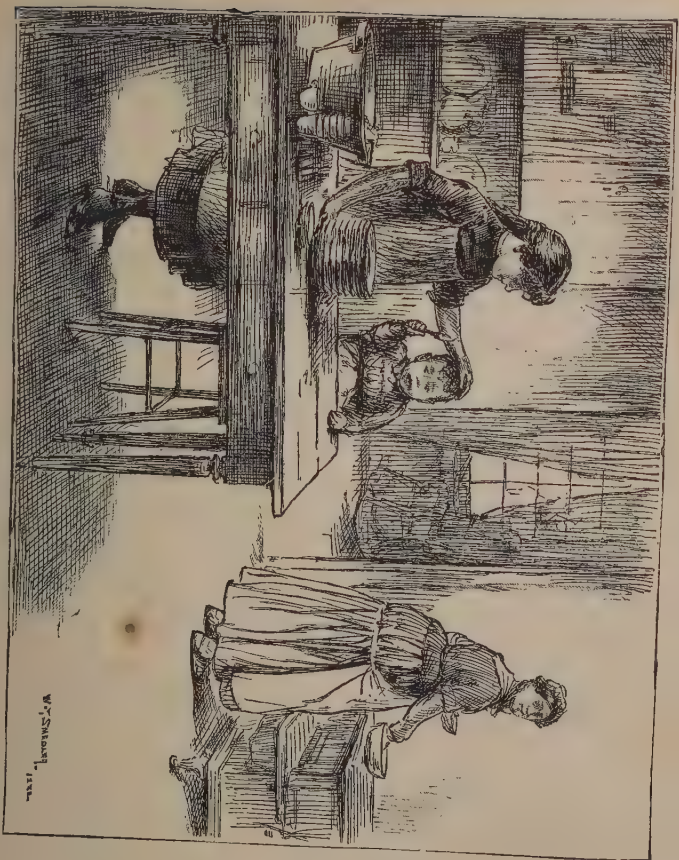
Jo—our Jo—had not half listened to Mrs. Dawson's long speech until the latter part. Jo! There was another one, then? She looked at the baby, who, tied in its high chair, was banging the table with a spoon, enjoyably, feeling a sudden affection for her unconscious little namesake.

It seemed queer to think of, too—as though she had given her name away to the baby all in that minute. Jo, who had depths of real womanliness in her untried nature, wiped one hand on her apron and putting it out stroked the baby's curly hair with more tenderness than she had ever displayed before.

"I should like to stay," she said to Mrs. Dawson; "and I'd work real hard, too, and I could look around for something to do in a day or two, I suppose, ma'am?"

"Oh, we'll see," said Mrs. Dawson, whose mother's

“SHE STROKED THE BABY’S CURLY HAIR WITH MORE TENDERNESS THAN SHE HAD EVER BEFORE DISPLAYED.”



eye had not failed to note the girl's involuntary caress; "we'll see how you get on. There—store!" she added, as a bell tinkled; "just run out and see what's wanted, my dear."

Jo hastened to the store, feeling her way through a labyrinth of boxes and odds and ends to the passage behind the counter.

The bright-eyed old lady from the brick house was the customer.

"Mrs. Dawson home?" she inquired, briskly.

"Yes'm," answered Jo.

"Well, you ask her to be sure and not fail me with my cap this afternoon by half-past five, not a minute later."

"That's old Mis' Burton," said Mrs. Dawson, when Jo had delivered the message. "I'm sure I hope I'll get a minute to finish her cap. Now, Mary," she added, "I'll leave you to see to things here and go back to Rachel."

CHAPTER XV.

JO certainly "earned her way" that long June day; but her cooking was a decided success, and she was so on the alert to be of use to Mrs. Dawson that she proved very satisfactory in more ways than one. The habits of order and tidiness she had acquired under Faith's constant tutelage came into excellent service here, for Mrs. Dawson, good-natured, kind-hearted, and always active, was not a very methodical house-keeper, although she fully appreciated what was done for her by others, and when Jo "picked up" and brushed the little sitting-room, Mrs. Dawson declared it looked "something like," which she hadn't supposed it would until Rachel was around again. ✓

The morbid, wretched fancies which had filled Jo's mind since the night in the jail seemed less hard to bear as the day, full of home-like occupations, wore on; and Jo, after all, was young and naturally strong, and the entire change was not unwelcome to her.

Mrs. Dawson had contrived to put the necessary touches to Mrs. Burton's cap, but when it came time to send it she could not leave the house, and so Jo was de-

spatched with the little bandbox, glad enough to walk out in the summer afternoon, and glad, she knew not why, to see the brick house.

Once there she was ushered into a large, dim sitting-room, where everything looked cool and pleasant, though very prim, and as though only elderly people occupied it; but Mrs. Burton came in briskly, putting back a curtain and examining the cap critically, while she looked at Jo once or twice with an inquiring air.

"You're new, ain't you, up there, my dear?" she said, in a friendly tone.

Jo said "Yes'm," and then was silent.

"Going to learn millinery, are you?"

Jo said "No'm" this time, and again was silent. The old lady seemed rather irritated by this reticence, but Jo's fear of discovery, of being "taken back," held her tongue in such check that Mrs. Burton, who took a keen interest in everything going on all around her, failed to extract anything more satisfactory from the stranger; but her last attempt had a certain result gratifying to Jo.

"I suppose you have given up school, my dear," said the old lady, in a kindly voice, "if you are out at work?"

Jo blushed as she admitted this to be the case.

"Well, perhaps you would like to attend a little evening school up at the parsonage three times a week, and very good instruction?"

Jo's eyes kindled. The old lady, catching the gleam, felt quite encouraged, and as at that moment a gentleman's step was heard in the hall, she called out,

"Dyke, come in here, please, a moment."

And a tall, broad-shouldered, middle-aged man, with a face grave and kindly, good-humored and yet firm in its lines, stood still on the threshold of the door.

"Dyke," continued the old lady, "this young girl's a stranger here, working up at Mrs. Dawson's, and I've just been telling her about Mr. Tone's evening classes. What do you think?"

Mr. Dyke Burton smiled with a little gleam of amusement. He knew his mother's faculty for interesting herself in everybody else's affairs, but as she always meant it kindly, and was full of generous actions, he never tried to do more than hold her in judicious check once in a while when her impulses or her curiosity led her too far.

He looked at Jo. Something in the girl's face appealed to him strongly, for it was not possible for Jo to hide the sadness, the anxiety, that lay so deeply in her heart; and her eyes, always wistful of late, were fixed upon him with a look which, for some reason, Mr. Burton never forgot.

"I'm sure it would please Mr. Tone to have a new pupil," he said, pleasantly. "What is the name, mother?"

There was a moment's silence before Jo said, with a deepened color,

"Mary Brooke, sir."

"I will not forget to mention it," said Mr. Burton, smiling and passing on.

Jo went out of the brick house feeling as though she was beginning a new sort of life. I do not think, until this sudden wrenching away from all her old associations had sharpened her mind and developed some new feelings, that Jo had realized what it was to have to act and think and decide for herself, and with a sense of duty as well as of patience governing her. I have told you that the year with Faith had been like five in its power over the girl's life, and in such natures and such lives as poor Jo's it is not possible to drift once the tide changes. The new ideas impressed gradually upon Jo's mind and heart and soul took a firmer hold upon her than if she had been living in luxury and ease, where one day seemed just to melt delightfully into another. The realities of life with people like Jo make this easy sort of "growth" impossible.

All the scents and fragrances of the June day seemed to be in the village street as Jo walked back to Mrs. Dawson's. She wondered where Miss Faith was, and what she would think of her flight.

"She will be glad, I guess," thought Jo, as she neared the store; "and she'll know I'm 'trying' somewhere."

Mrs. Dawson greeted Jo from behind the counter of the store with a look of real satisfaction.

"I declare," she said, good-humoredly, "I had no idea how I needed help, Mary. I'm glad as I can be to see you back. The baby's asleep, but I wish you'd carry Rachel's tea up to her. You can tell her anything that happened up to Mis' Burton's, too; it'll amuse her. She and Mis' Burton are great friends. They about keep the news of Burnham agoing, I tell 'em."

The tray was ready, and Jo, following Mrs. Dawson's directions, carried it carefully up the staircase to a room at the back of the house, a comfortable, cosy bedroom with a pleasant outlook, and where, in a big old-fashioned bedstead, the sick girl was lying, propped up by pillows.

She was a girl of about Jo's age, but very plump and rosy in spite of her cold; her bright blue eyes were cheery, and her smile brought dimples and showed the prettiest of white teeth; her fair hair was neatly braided, and she wore a tidy little blue flannel dressing-gown, in which she looked very trim and comfortable.

Everything in the room though plain was cosy, and if lacking all the luxuries of Miss Faith's apartment yet it was home-like and very pleasing to look upon, from the bright young girl among her pillows to the little knickknacks on the bureau and above the book-rack. There was no regular carpet on the floor, only some gay

colored strips at the bedside and before the bureau, but what impressed Jo as she stood still a moment in the door-way was the fact that up here in Rachel's room the order and tidiness lacking down-stairs was complete. No wonder Mrs. Dawson was anxious for Rachel to be "up and about."

"Come in," said Rachel, pleasantly. "You are Mary Brooks, I suppose; mother told me about you."

She looked at Jo brightly and pleasantly. "I shall be up soon I hope and get things straight down-stairs. I suppose everything is at sixes and sevens, isn't it? And do the children bother much? There, put the tray on the bed, please. Thank you."

Rachel had the brightest sort of voice, so that Jo did not mind being asked so many questions or talked to so steadily, and Rachel seemed to need no particular response. She went right on:

"You've been up with Mrs. Burton's cap. I was so sorry not to be able to take it. She always has something new to tell me. Did you see Mr. Dyke Burton?"

She waited here until Jo said "Yes," and then went on: "He's the best man in Burnham. He has the woollen mills across the bridge, and if you want a place you'd better go to him."

"Oh, would he give me a place?" said Jo, earnestly.

"Well, I guess so," answered Rachel. "If I am up to-morrow I'll go and see him about it."

But all of Rachel's eagerness to be "about again," all her energy and ambition did not avail. That night Jo was wakened from her first sleep in the little attic room given her by Mrs. Dawson, who was in a state of terror over her daughter's condition. Fever had set in; the poor woman was sure it was "*Monia*," and Jo was hurried down to light the kitchen-fire while Mrs. Dawson rushed for the doctor.

And so it came about that for weeks no thought of Jo's leaving occurred to Mrs. Dawson. Quiet, but prompt and active, the girl filled all sorts of little "odd and even" places in the household; too anxious to remain somewhere in peace and security to care what she did, how early or late she toiled, or to think of the future, and in no place or way could she have been more successfully hidden. In Mrs. Dawson's employ Jo Markham, transformed into Mary Brooks, passed out of sight or hearing of Ashfield. No one but the girl herself knew how sometimes lying awake at night, or when, on rare occasions, she got down to the beach, a sudden longing to see the old place—to be near Faith again, if only for five minutes—would come over her; but the dogged resolution "not to bother her," and to try somewhere to be good and to work, kept this feeling in check. There was no fear so long as the sky of her life continued clear that Jo would go back; no fear that she would be a "bother" to any one of those she had left.

CHAPTER XVI.

“**T**HERE, if my life depended upon it, I couldn’t go up that ladder again!”

The speaker was one of a group of girls who had been busy all a certain August afternoon decorating the school-house at Burnham for its annual “teachers’ and friends’ meeting.”

“I’m all tired out,” the girl continued, sitting down and regarding her last effort with complacency.

“Where is Rachel Dawson?” said a second voice—that of a slim, active looking girl of about fourteen, who joined the group with a very earnest and preoccupied manner.

“I think she went up to Mrs. Burton’s for something,” was the answer; “but Mary Brooks is here.”

The name was no sooner spoken than a voice from behind a pile of summer vines and wild flowers said,

“Yes, I’m here;” and a tall figure, which I think no one in Ashfield could have recognized as “Jo Markham’s,” came in view; its owner standing up above her work, and looking out upon the other girls with a quiet glance.

In the fourteen months of life at Burnham Jo had altered surprisingly. She had seemed to "shoot up," as Mrs. Dawson said, into a tall girl of sixteen "almost while you looked at her," but with the childish roundness or plumpness Jo had lost some of her old vigor. The brown tints of her cheeks and hands had given way to a clear-toned healthful white, but the outline of her face was delicate now, making her eyes look darker and more wistful than ever; and in place of the rough masses of hair were smooth brown locks, brushed back as Rachel wore hers, ignorant of "bangs," and coiled neatly at the back, the most recent touch of "girlhood's new beginning grace," upon which Rachel Dawson had insisted, and to which Jo, conscious of her height, and perhaps of the seriousness of the face which looked at her once a day from her little mirror, yielded, glad to be rid of the long braids of hair she was tired of caring for and wearing down her back.

Jo had never left the Dawsons. During Rachel's illness she had proved so efficient a "helper" in the little household, the invalid had grown so fond of her quiet, orderly, and yet active ways that, when she was up and about again, she had decreed that Jo, or "Mary Brooks," was to remain and help them at home, attending Mr. Tone's evening classes, and "picking up" the sort of millinery and fancy-work which Mrs. Dawson was famous for in Burnham.

In a household of wealthier or idler people Jo might not have prospered or have kept her Ashfield story so securely to herself; but good-hearted and "homely," in its best meaning, as the Dawsons were, they had to work hard late and early, so that Jo found plenty of occupation of a healthy kind, which, mingled as it was with a sense of security and a pleasant home, where she was treated from the first like one of the family, was the very safest and best thing which could have happened to Jo; and once or twice it had occurred to her that it might not have happened if she had started forth from Ashfield in a different frame of mind—been at heart rebellious, wicked, or only anxious for freedom.

Occurred to her only; for even now Jo was not given to much speculative thought about herself. She still, in her old fashion, accepted things as they came, unless—as sometimes happened—a chance would bring out one of her flashes of tempestuous feeling, a sudden wild longing to be in Ashfield again, a half prayer to be near to Faith. So the home-like, constant activity was good, and the companionship of a cheerful, bright girl of her own age the very best thing possible; while much of the tenderness which was so deep in the girl's heart was lavished on baby Jo. Never was she too tired, or busy, or down-hearted not to be glad of the child's presence, the feeling of the little face pressed against her own, the tiny arms held fast about her neck.

Mrs. Dawson was given to good-natured complaints that her "Jo" never would look at any one else if "Mary" was around.

So Jo, putting her shoulder well to the wheel, all influences had worked for good, and among them, of no small consequence, was Mrs. Burton's having been interested in her from the first. Her son also had been better pleased with Jo than most of his mother's *protégées*, and at the evening classes he often stopped for a word or two with the anxious, painstaking, though not over-brilliant scholar, who had learned at last to read and write and cipher, and keep Mrs. Dawson's store accounts quite accurately. To give all the details of Jo's life at Burnham would be impossible, but they seemed to her, looking back a long time afterwards, to have included many things of greater consequence than she had dreamed. The seed Faith had sown and seen spring into life was tended and nourished; the green stem and the first leaflets were waiting for a time of bloom, and Jo had a vague feeling often that something more was going to happen to her. Something, hard to say what, and perhaps it might startle all this quiet, cheerfully monotonous life out of place, and put her away back into "hard times" again.

The Burnham young people had accepted Jo as Rachel Dawson's friend, and always included her in school-treats and picnics, teachers' festivals and the like; but

the girl, not used even to such simple "society" of girls and boys of her own age, shrank from anything that demanded of her more than to be a "helper," as she was on this occasion—a great one for Burnham, since people had been invited far and wide.

"Rachel has the flag we want, Mary," said the first speaker; "do you mind going up to Mrs. Burton's for her?"

"I'll go," answered Jo, readily. She came out from behind the tangle of greenery and put on her hat and gloves. One strongly characteristic feature of "Jo Markham" remained. To be out on the water, walking up the hills or down in the valley, morning, noon, or night, at any time, in any weather, was still her delight, and much as she enjoyed decorating the long school-room, she was glad of the chance for a breath of fresh air. The August day was very warm. Burnham's main street, although well shaded, had the heavy stillness which makes a summer day, in spite of sweet fragrance and the abundant green, seem oppressive, and Jo walked slowly, wishing that a breeze would come up before evening and cool the air, or else, she thought, the school-house, with so many people, would be stifling. She was wondering who were the strangers from a distance who were to come, recalling the different names she had heard, none of which were familiar to her. But the large square house was in view, and just as Jo roused herself from

her dreaming she saw that the Burton family carriage had arrived, evidently from the depot, with some of the visitors whom the old lady of the house was to entertain overnight.

Jo, somewhat mechanically, stood still, saw the door of the house flung open, and Mrs. Burton standing smiling on the threshold, while her son sprang from the carriage and assisted two ladies to alight.

The smaller and elder of the two came first, and moved towards the house. Jo took little heed of her. All, it seemed to her, of sight, of thought, of heart and soul for that moment was concentrated upon the second figure, as with the step, the uplifted head, the fair sweet glance she knew so well, Jo beheld Faith Emerson pass through the low gate-way.

It was the work of but one moment, yet to the girl, standing a few yards distant, with one of her hands leaning heavily upon the railing, the other tightly clinched and down against her side, it seemed as though she had seen and thought and felt what might have occupied half an hour, for, in that first swift recognition of Faith, Jo had detected a change in her. Beautiful and gracious and lovely she was—she must be always—but the dear face had grown white and thin, the hand that Jo saw held out to Mrs. Burton, in its dainty white silk mitten, was like a little shadow, and the hoop of pearls was no longer there.

The door closed upon them—closed upon this first actual vision from Jo's past, and the girl stood still in a dazed, bewildered way, conscious of an aching feeling in her heart and a rush of blinding tears to her eyes. What could she do? At first she thought only of the fact that Faith was there—that she was ill—and with it came the impulse to rush in and see her. Indeed Jo never knew why she hesitated—what dread it was which held her back. Instead of going, as was her custom, to the front door, she hurried around to the kitchen entrance, sent the message to Rachel, and then sped away, her heart beating, her eyes heavy with those sudden though unshed tears, and her chief thought to reach home as soon as possible. She wanted time to think what she had better do.

CHAPTER XVII.

MRS. DAWSON and the children were in the parlor back of the store, and Jo called out from the door-way to her little namesake, who toddled forward at once, eager for "Mary" to take her.

"Why, Mary," said Mrs. Dawson, "you're as white as paper. Well, this *is* a hot day!"

"I'm tired," said Jo, wearily, "but I'd like to take baby up-stairs with me; you know I never mind her."

And Jo took the little hand in her own, and together they slowly made the ascent of the stairs.

Jo shared Rachel's room now. She had her own "side," with a little bureau and washing-stand and a special strip of carpet, and one window, a small one with a swinging pane, was always regarded as hers by right. In this was a low chair, and Jo seated herself, holding little Jo closely in her arms, and resting her head against the side of the window while her thoughts sped on.

The little child was tired too, and soon in Jo's comforting arms fell asleep. Jo moved to make the curly head easier, and instinctively threw her apron over the

little chubby bare knees, but she was not aware of anything she was doing, so full was her mind of this new and bewildering emergency.

¶ For the first time it had flashed upon her mind that perhaps Faith would not understand why she had run away. In the last fourteen months many of Jo's simple points of view had been slowly changing, impressed you see or influenced by the regular home-life with its straightforward rules, its very commonplaceness. Whereas "Jo Markham" had no idea whatever that any duty to home could exist in Sailors' Row, "Mary," living day by day in the cheerful, home-like, though simple atmosphere of the Dawson's family, had gradually learned to appreciate what the daily duties and obligations of life are, and to think vaguely, no doubt, and with many fluttering fears of any going back to Ashfield, where the thought of the jail still came over her with sickening dread; that perhaps she had no right to have run away as she did. I speak of all this because in thinking of Jo's story it has always seemed to me that God helped her into the right places so tenderly, so mercifully. Could any two years and a half have included better lessons or better influences? And had Faith turned away from Jo that long ago morning, had she used less tact, been less gentle, would the girl, growing now to womanhood, sitting in her window with the little child happily sleeping on her knees, have of her-

self weighed right and wrong so cautiously, yet with so great a simplicity?

"Why, Mary," said Rachel's voice, suddenly, "aren't you getting ready to go down to the school-house? You know Mrs. Mason asked us to be prompt there by six o'clock. Mrs. Jones is coming over to be with the children you know."

"Oh, Rachel," said Jo, lifting her heavy eyes, "I don't think I can go down; perhaps later. I don't feel a bit well."

Rachel was at her friend's side in an instant, her cheery, round face full of compassion.

"You do look white," she said, "and your eyes are as big as saucers. Won't you try and see if a cup of tea helps you? Do put that heavy child down; I should think this hot day was enough without that."

But Jo held her little charge until, Mrs. Dawson and Rachel having gone off in great spirits, though full of sympathy for the one left behind, she was alone. Then, putting the baby and Rosy to bed, she went down-stairs, where old Mrs. Jones was having a cup of tea, and asking her to "keep an ear" to the children, she put on her hat and went out of the house.

Faith and Miss Grace would, she knew, sit with the party from Mrs. Burton's, and as she had helped set the tables that afternoon, she knew where their places would be—directly at the upper end of the longest table, close



"SHE NOTED HOW MUCH CLEARER OF COLOR AND THINNER OF FACE
SHE WAS."

to a window, which, on so warm a night as this, would surely be open. So, thought Jo, if she went down there a little later she could at least be within sight and sound of her beloved friend; and perhaps she herself was so changed Faith would not know her, even if she were in the room helping wait, as she had promised to do. Jo had taken a critical look at herself in the glass, noted how much clearer of color and thinner of face she was; but she had only the faintest idea of what impression she used to produce on anybody's mind. Looking at the quiet, earnest face in the little mirror, with its framework of perfectly smooth hair, and its grave, dark eyes, the girl had asked herself, with a wistful smile, what did "Jo Markham" look like? She felt sure it was not quite like this.

By eight o'clock the supper-party would be assembled. Jo loitered about the beach-road while the summer dusk gathered and the evening closed in. The warm, still night was very lovely out-of-doors; but Jo was feverishly eager to see Faith, and as soon as the shadows were close enough she made her way to the school-house, and around to that end where she knew the window opened upon a bit of lawn.

The lights were already casting a cheerful illumination around about, making the school-house quite a brilliant spot in the dusky evening, and as all the windows stood open, Jo, as she hastened around the building,

caught the rise and fall of many voices, laughter, the sound of steps, the clattering of china and glass, as the banquet proceeded. The window was open.

Jo stood still a moment. Having gained her point of observation she hardly dared go farther; but at last courage came. She knelt down on the soft, dry grass, and, keeping in shadow at one side, looked in.

The room presented the appearance customary on such occasions. A large decorated platform at the upper end was deserted now, but would, as Jo knew, soon be occupied by the performers and speakers of the evening. Meanwhile, there was animation enough in the scene below.

Three long tables were filled to their utmost capacity with the school committees from different neighboring towns, as well as those of Burnham itself—with teachers, friends, visitors, and “sympathizers.” Never had Burnham gathered together such a company; but the eyes of one observer sought one face and figure only, and these, with a quick drawing in of her breath, Jo had found.

The long, narrow table reached to the very farthest point of the room, and was drawn as near as possible to the window. At the head sat Mr. Burton, his broad shoulders almost framed by the lintel, but at his right was Faith; and Jo, crouching in the still, cool darkness outside, feasted her lonely eyes eagerly upon her.

Faith was talking and listening with a look of soft

pleasure and interest, and it gave her cheeks their old pretty pink color once again. Jo took in every detail of the dear face, every detail of the dress she wore: the soft white muslins, and ribbons of creamy satin; the little chip bonnet, with its tuft of buttercups and delicate green leaves. How pure and simple and like Faith it all looked! Jo strained her ears to listen for every word that fell from Miss Emerson's lips. After some remarks from Mr. Burton,

"It is too bad," Faith was saying; "I wish I might stay, but, you see, my cousin Bertie is so interested in this trial. For the matter of that, every one in Ashfield is."

"I think they have taken a long time to find the murderer," said Mrs. Burton. "If it had been in Burnham now, dear Miss Emerson, we wouldn't have left a stone unturned."

And the little old lady laughed quizzically, while her son said,

"My mother means she would have taken it in hand herself. I don't doubt she would have unearthed the real culprit."

"The chief trouble," said Faith's soft voice again, "seems to be that the very witnesses are such a low set it is hard to rely upon them for anything. Still, my cousin Bertie, who is studying law, you know, in Mr. Hogencamp's office, maintains that he believes this lad,

Sandy Martin, is not guilty. But everything is against him. He was seen quarrelling with the young man in the afternoon, and threatening him, and they were also seen together about an hour before the man was murdered. The boy is in a condition of the most abject terror. What goes chiefly against him is that he ran away directly afterwards, and has only just now been caught."

"Dear me, dear me!" ejaculated Mrs. Burton.

Faith's voice went on :

"You see, the very same night poor young Moxon was murdered there was an attempted robbery at my house, and so the village constables were in a general state of confusion the next day, as one of the men concerned in the robbery was an old offender, and they had been on the lookout for him a long time. He escaped, and was caught again, and died soon afterwards. This boy, Sandy Martin, was his son. It was a dreadfully exciting night for Ashfield, I assure you. The Rexfords' yacht was plundered, and the robbery, or attempt, at my house took place precisely at the hour of the murder."

"What was that?" exclaimed Mrs. Burton, looking towards the window.

A sound had come in suddenly, something like a moan or the spasmodic drawing of a breath; but Jo had shrunk back, away out of hearing or sight, creeping on like some

wounded creature until she reached a place where she could sit down in the darkness alone, and there, clasping her arms about her knees, she let her head fall down upon them.

She had thought something would happen; and now it had. And, although in the most confused, bewildering fashion, she felt sure that it would take her back to Ashfield, to be disgraced forever! The poor child tried vainly to move her lips in prayer, to think how she could avert so terrible an evil, so dark a future as that which seemed to shape itself in hideous forms before her closed and aching eyes. She had crept away because she could not listen to any more; she had heard enough; but she felt that on the morrow she ought to seek out Faith and tell her all.

When she could move she made her way slowly and very wearily back to the store, still thinking and thinking and trying to feel sure that she need not make herself known while Faith and Miss Grace were here. Oh, if only Faith had mentioned her—Jo; if she could have formed some idea of her former benefactresses' feelings about her and her running away. And then poor Jo wondered if she was forgotten.

Mrs. Jones was eager to hear some account of the festivity, and disappointed that Mary Brooks had nothing to tell; but the girl's haggard face was excuse enough for her going directly to bed, where little Jo in the crib

at her side was a sort of comfort not unmixed with pain, for as the girl bent over the child she loved so truly a pang shot through her heart. When they "knew all" would they ever speak to her, or let her touch or kiss little Jo again?

Ashfield meant disgrace in Jo's mind, and yet she felt sure to Ashfield she must go.

Rachel came home late and was soon asleep; but for Jo the hours of the night were long and weary, and before sleep her resolution had come. Early the next day she would go to Mr. Burton's and present herself to Faith. What would the latter say on hearing the story Jo would have to tell?

CHAPTER XVIII.

JO slept late the next morning; awoke to find the sunlight streaming into her room, and Rachel standing beside her, with her breakfast on a tray.

Rachel laughed merrily.

“Well, Mary,” she exclaimed, “so you have waked up at last. Do you know it is ten o’clock?”

Rachel seated herself on the side of the bed with sparkling eyes.

“Oh, how I wish you were there last night,” she continued; “it was perfectly delightful. That lovely Miss Emerson from Ashfield was there. Mrs. Burton has talked so much of her I’ve just been wild to see her, and she came and talked to us girls, oh so beautifully—told us lots of interesting things. And what do you suppose? She is going to give a large party for us in September. It is all arranged with Mr. Burton: cars to be chartered, and a splendid time all around. Fanny Lee has seen her place at Ashfield; she and her mother once spent the day there, and she says it is a lovely house, and Miss Emerson’s own room is fit for a princess. Why, what’s the matter, Mary?”

For Jo, feeling faint and trembling, had turned very white.

"Nothing," she answered, trying to look cheerful and interested. "Go on, Rachel; tell me more about Miss Emerson."

"Oh, she is *so* lovely," cried Rachel, enthusiastically. "But, unfortunately, she is very delicate, and in October she is to go South or to Europe for her health. Her old aunt seems rather anxious about her. She sang for us, too. I wish you could have been there, Mary."

Rachel darted away, hearing the store-bell ring, and Jo locked her hands together in fresh agony. Oh, the shame and misery and sorrowfulness of it all! Over and over again came back Faith's own words. No one in Ashfield would believe in her; yet she must face them—must see Faith, and submit to whatever punishment or disgrace followed. And they all, as Rachel said, would go to Ashfield and be with Faith, see her, talk to her; while she, Jo, perhaps would be behind prison bars!

Never had the little room she and Rachel shared looked so cosy and home-like to Jo as on this morning; never had the house seemed so cheerful, the store so attractive, Mrs. Dawson so kind, or Rachel's voice, as she sang gayly over her work, so bright and tuneful. Little Jo clung to her skirts as soon as she was downstairs, and she caught the child in her arms, kissing the little chubby face and soft neck twenty times while

Mrs. Dawson looked up smiling to say, "You'll hev that young one so spoiled, Mary Brooks, the house won't hold her bime-by."

"May I go up street a little while, Mrs. Dawson," asked Jo—"I want to speak to Mr. Burton."

"Why yes, of course," was the answer, and as Jo departed she continued to Rachel, "I declare Mr. Burton told me he wanted to see Mary this morning and I forgot all about it."

Jo walked hurriedly up the village street. The day was lovely after the torrid heat of yesterday, with little soft breezes moving the green leaves above her, rocking the boats that were moored along the narrow stream that divided the town, and touching everything with a sweet sense as of new life and exhilaration. Where house windows stood open the rooms within looked very cheerful, and in the very faces of passers-by was something that went to Jo's heart, making the girl wild to cling to this new, bright, peaceful life which had grown so dear to her for months past. For among the Dawson's class Jo had made friends; she had been cheerful and happy at times, always looking forward to seeing Faith some day, and meanwhile being too young and vigorous not to be at times light-hearted. Her young friends in the evening-school, it is true thought her very quiet and grave, and a great deal too anxious to learn, but at home, with bonny, gay-hearted Rachel her voice

and step, even her laughter had gained much of the sweetness and gayety belonging to her years ; although her joyousness had always a tinge of something quieter and calmer than Rachel's, yet it shone forth in her eyes and had softened the girl's whole face.

The sense that it was all to be changed now hastened Joe's steps ; all the happy, familiar sights and sounds jarred upon her, and she only longed to hurry towards Mr. Burton's house. Her lips trembled as she put the important question to the servant at the door,

" Can I see Miss Emerson, please ?"

Mr. Dyke Burton was crossing the hall, and on sight of " Mary Brooks," who was a decided favorite of his mother's, he stopped and answered her query.

" Miss Emerson left by an early train this morning," he said, and added, " Come in, Mary, won't you ?"

" Left !" cried Jo.

She moved into the large hall and stood still a moment, looking imploringly at the kind-hearted gentleman.

" Oh, Mr. Burton," she said, sinking down on the bench near the door, " what am I to do ?"

CHAPTER XIX.

MR. BURTON was accustomed to having the young people of Joe's class in Burnham apply to him for counsel, but he saw at once that in the present case there was something unusual.

"Come into my study, Mary," he said, quickly, and opened the door of the room to which Jo had often gone on pleasant errands, and which she entered now feeling that it was to bid it good-bye forever.

Mr. Burton pushed forward a wicker chair, and when Jo sat down he said, in his kindest voice,

"What is it, my dear? you seem in trouble."

"Oh yes, sir," cried Jo; "oh, if only she had stayed! I wanted to see Miss Faith, to tell her everything!"

The girl paused, her voice too choked for utterance. Then suddenly she stood up and resolved to tell it all to Mr. Burton. She had learned to feel it not right to act on her own judgment only. She felt that to some one the whole story must be told, and advice asked and given.

"I don't know how to tell you, sir," Jo said, piteous-

ly, and standing a little distance from Mr. Burton, who was seated by his table. "I don't know what you will think or say. You may tell me I am not fit to be here. I don't know. But I'm determined to go back to Ashfield; yes, I must. If she had been here it would have easier. Last night I was outside the window of the school-house. I knew she was there, and I went just to look at her and hear her speak again. Then I heard her telling about the trial that is to be in Ashfield. I know that Sandy Martin, Mr. Burton, and I know he is not the murderer!"

There was dead silence in the room for perhaps half a moment.

Jo had no idea of the effect of her words upon Mr. Burton, nor how much of herself she had revealed to him in those few incoherent sentences.

At breakfast that morning Faith had said to him that she and Bertie were trying everywhere to find the girl who had been implicated in the robbery—a girl in whom she had taken a great interest, but who, on being released from prison on her bail, had run away.

Keen man of the world as Mr. Burton was, in a flash he understood that this *protégée* of Miss Emerson and the girl he had known for a year and a half as "Mary Brooks" were one and the same.

"You know?" he exclaimed. "And then you, Mary, are the girl Miss Emerson told me of this morning?"



“‘I DON’T KNOW HOW TO TELL YOU, SIR,’ JO SAID, PITEOUSLY.”

A wave of scarlet color swept over Jo's white face. She let her head droop, and said, in a choked way,

"What did she say, sir? Oh, did she think me very wrong?"

Mr. Burton began to pace the floor.

"She spoke very sorrowfully," he answered. "She said she was terribly disappointed in you."

Jo slowly lifted her face, from which all the burning, shameful wave had died now, and looked at Mr. Burton with a gaze that went to the good man's heart in its unutterable sadness.

"I didn't mean her to be," the girl said, in a low tone; "I only meant to save her trouble and bother; and she said no one in all Ashfield would believe in me, or believe what I could tell about that dreadful night. But oh, sir, I see now—I think I've seen for a long time—I was wrong. All I want now is to go back and do whatever is right. I suppose they'll put me in prison again, but what I'll say will be the truth, and I think"—Jo looked earnestly at Mr. Burton—"I think they'll believe what I have to say about Sandy, because, sir, every one in Ashfield or in Sailors' Row knows we never were good friends, and how we used to fight, and how I hated him."

Mr. Burton ceased walking a moment. The confidence in Jo, which had been dashed by what she had said, together with Faith's communication, was begin-

ning to return; but he felt that the case was one which required careful thought, although no doubt very speedy action.

"I think, Mary," he said, finally, and sitting down again, "you had better tell me the whole story. Then I will know what had best be done, and how we can do it."

His tone, the "we" spoken with kindly emphasis, reassured poor Jo. She moved forward, and, taking the chair by the table, began her story slowly, and with an evident desire to be accurate and particular as to time and place.

Much she told: first of Faith's goodness and care; something of her life with her old grandfather; and then went on to the principal events, in which Mr. Burton was now specially interested. There was not the slightest effort to make things seem well for herself in any way. As he listened, Mr. Burton became entirely convinced that Jo was telling him only the simple truth, and that with every wish to see her old foe, Sandy, done common justice.

CHAPTER XX.

WHEN Jo had finished, and Mr. Burton had cross-questioned her in various ways, the morning was far advanced. To both speaker and listener the time had flown, but never afterwards could Jo forget the look of the cheerful study that August day: the sunshine coming in pleasantly; the books, chairs, and tables so cosily arranged; the pictures she had always cared for catching gleams of light or melting under shadows. Outside the lawn, with its fine cedar-trees dappled over with spots of light and shade, the hum of bees, the occasional sweet note of a robin sounding in her ears while she spoke, and with all was a curious feeling, more like a real sensation than Jo had ever known, that she was to be shut out forever from these sounds and sights of the outside world she loved so well, and the peacefulness and content of the home-life she had learned to value and care for.

Jo's eyes had wandered towards the sunny picture outside the low French windows, but now she turned them gravely back to Mr. Burton's thoughtful face.

"You say, sir, you don't know what they will do with

me?" She asked the question quietly yet with a note in her young voice that sounded like a sob.

"No, Mary," Mr. Burton answered, in a perplexed way, "I can't tell yet. Whatever is right I hope, but if you are brave and tell all the truth you may hope for the best. Now I think you had better remain here while I arrange for our journey to Ashfield. I will make it all right with Mrs. Dawson and Rachel. We can start by the three o'clock train."

Jo's heart beat furiously a moment, and then stood still. Must she go without one word of good-bye? But she dared not oppose Mr. Burton's plan. When he looked up from his study of the time-table he noticed no change in the wistful earnest face, the attitude of anxious waiting.

"Best to get there at once," he said; "but you cannot go to Miss Emerson's. She is not strong enough to bear the excitement of an interview before you appear in court. Besides that it will not do to have any one but Mr. Hogencamp, who is this Martin's lawyer, know you are there, but I have a friend who I am sure would receive you kindly; she has a small hotel now, a quiet place, where you would be comfortable."

Jo listened; she tried to follow all that Mr. Burton was saying, but the overwhelming facts of what she had voluntarily decided to do filled her mind so that she seemed only to take in the barest meaning of his words.

She was to go; Mr. Burton would be with her; she was to go into court, to tell every one who might be there all that she had related this morning, and it would set her old enemy Sandy free, and might close the prison doors upon her. Well, it must be right somehow. It seemed right even if it was cruel. Jo's heart, nay, let me now say her soul, took this in, and it was, I have always thought, her first actual hour of heroism—the first real sign and fragrance of the flower part of the girl's life.

But it appealed to her with no delicate, poetic, or romantic suggestiveness. I doubt if Jo had ever heard of any heroes or heroines or martyrs to any cause. What she had chosen to do was from the very depths and force of that divine part of her, her conscience, which had wakened to tell her what lay before her with the first comprehension of Faith's words that night in the school-house; but I have often thought that in the face of the young girl, white, dry-eyed and still, which Mr. Burton observed so compassionately that August morning, he might have seen that "shadow of God's messenger" which we are told to look for as if it were a glory.

"If you don't object, Mary," Mr. Burton went on, "I will tell my mother that I have to go with you to Ashfield on business. I assure you she can keep a secret admirably, and as some one must know, it had better be

her. I think it wisest." And seeing Jo's mute look of assent, Mr. Burton went away, returning in a few minutes to say that Mrs. Burton wanted Jo to have a little dinner before they started.

The old lady was subdued and very gentle in manner, kindly pressing all sorts of excellent food upon Jo, who, however, with difficulty made a slight meal. Now that the excitement of telling her story was over, she felt only impatience to be off, and she could not talk, could scarcely hear what was said; she felt even in one sense too lifeless to ask Mr. Burton how he had contrived to "make all right" with the Dawsons.

That he had done so successfully she felt sure, but only when they were on the train, steaming away towards Ashfield, with a terrible pang of separation. She was going—going forever, no doubt, from those dear, dear friends! Oh, was it worth while? Had she been wise to speak and bring all this upon herself? And then came back to the still simple and childish mind what Mr. Burton had said to her. It would be like "bearing false witness" to go on living with that silence as sinful as speech on her mind.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE 21st of August was an exciting day for Ashfield. No trial had ever interested the place or any of its people so much as that of Sandy, or Alexander Martin, for the murder of young George Moxon on the night of May 30th, fifteen months before.

The murder had no doubt been a cruel and vindictive one, but that was not the main reason for the general desire to bring the murderer to justice. Ashfield "society" would not have been so much interested but for the surrounding circumstances, the other events which had belonged to the same period.

Various small, but, as Mrs. Keith had expressed it, "annoying" robberies had been committed in the town, and the night of the 30th of May was marked first by the murder, then by an attempted robbery at Miss Emerson's house, and the complete plundering of a very fine private yacht whose owners were away, and which for the night had been left in charge of one sailor only.

Naturally enough, the constables of the town and detectives from a larger city were speedily at work; but the most curious part of it all was that the very men

suspected most strongly, and who had evidently been ringleaders in the general villany of the night, could not be found. Job Martin, it is true, was tracked, but only at his death-bed; Ryerson and Tucker were hunted down and imprisoned for as long a term as the nature of any offence proven against them would admit; but the one on whom all suspicion of being the murderer rested, Sandy Martin, had only just been discovered in the mining country of Pennsylvania, and was now in Ashfield on trial for his life.

Sandy, of course, had protested his innocence, but at least a dozen witnesses had been called to prove the contrary, and among them these facts had been made very clear:

Sandy and young Moxon had been seen together quarrelling on the beach road at half-past ten or eleven o'clock; various people testified to having heard the angry words and threats used by Sandy, and added to all this was the fact that the slung-shot used as a weapon by the murderer was proven to have been Martin's; one he had purchased in Bayberry, the neighboring village, and which he had been heard to say would "make a corpse of some one in Ashfield before he was a week older."

That Sandy was one of a reckless, lawless family also told against him; that he had no friends among the better kind of people in the town was also hard; and

when Miss Emerson had—privately, it is true—engaged a lawyer for his defence, she had not dared even admit as much to her aunt, nor to allow, even to herself, that her chief reason for so doing was because she felt almost sure of Sandy's innocence, and surer still that the course of the trial would bring something of her long-lost Jo to light.

For Faith had been convinced for a year past that Jo's flight had something directly to do with the murder. She had not in the least appreciated what the tortures of her twenty-four hours' imprisonment had been to the girl; not in the least understood the terrible impression made by her own parting words upon Jo's already over-strung and excited mind. How astonished, therefore, would she have been had she known that her own chance words at the Burnham festival gave Jo the first intimation of Sandy's capture, arrest, or supposed crime. Equally surprised would Faith have been to know that on the morning of the 30th, while she and Miss Grace lingered at breakfast discussing the probable result of the trial that day, Jo was not half a mile distant, in the little up-stairs sitting-room of good Mrs. Joyce's hotel, waiting for the appearance of Mr. Burton, who was to conduct her to court.

Jo could not have said why she felt so strangely still and silent. She had no doubts of herself. She felt sure she could answer whatever "they" chose to ask her; but

for the present, until she had to move or speak, the girl could only keep very still.

"You'd better try and eat a bit more, my dear, I'm thinking," said the kind-hearted Scotch landlady, pouring out a large cup of tea and glancing regretfully at Jo's untasted breakfast. "It won't do you any good to go yonder fasting."

Jo was in the window, with her bonnet and gloves on, all ready for her summons, but she turned to Mrs. Joyce, shaking her head.

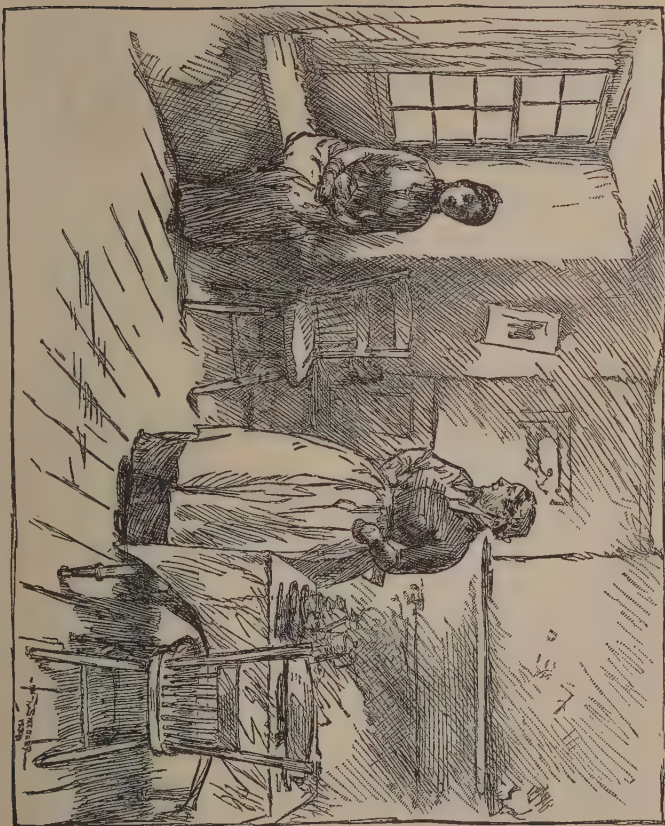
"I couldn't eat, thank you, ma'am," she said, quietly, and then continued to watch the sunny street for the first token of Mr. Burton's coming.

"I'm wondering what the creature'll say in court the day," said Mrs. Joyce, down-stairs in her own parlor, to her lame daughter, who was her confidante, and so had understood that Mr. Burton brought this "Mary Brooks" as a witness for the defendant in the murder case, so exciting to them all. "If she doesn't rouse up there'll not be much good to be had out of her. There she sits, with those great mournful eyes of hers fixed and so sad looking! Eh, but she makes me think of somebody, and I can't tell just who it is."

"What like is she, mother?" queried Jeanie Joyce, with much interest.

"Oh, a tall, well-made lassie, about sixteen year old, I should say; fairish, with pretty, glossy brown

“‘YOU’D BETTER TRY AND EAT A BIT MORE, MY DEAR.’”



hair, as neatly combed back as you please, and a nice, simple young face. But it's her eyes that puzzle me. I've met their look somewhere before. I'm bound to think it out." And Mrs. Joyce, who was determined to attend this all-important day of the trial, went about the work of her household with a perplexed, ruminating air. Whose eyes were they?

Mr. Burton had been closeted an hour with Mr. Hogencamp and Bertie that morning. The evening previous the old lawyer had put Jo through her story, and been convinced, as was Mr. Burton, of the entire truthfulness of what the girl said.

"I believe you are telling the truth, my dear," he had said, rather energetically, as Jo finished.

The young girl looked at him in quiet wonderment.

"Why, what else did I come here for, sir?" she said, softly.

To Jo it seemed strange that any one, even a perfect stranger and a fine gentleman like Mr. Hogencamp, should suppose she would wish to put herself in such a terrible position if it were not for the sake of truth. But, as I have said, there was nothing "romantic" about Jo; she had no desire for "heroinism."

Bertie Farnham's state of mind, as may well be imagined, bordered on the ecstatic, but it was awfully hard not to be able to tell Faith all at once; but Faith, not ill from any cause that she or the doctor could detect,

must not, they all said, have any "shock" or excitement. Dr. Wraxall, the old physician of Ashfield, as he looked at the sweet young face, with its gradually fading bloom, its deepening lines, and ever-growing tenderness and softness, would shake his head, recalling the mother who had died when Faith was a baby; and the elderly people of Ashfield said among themselves that Faith never had been vigorous, never really strong, forgetting the many seasons when her step had been lightest and freest among Ashfield maidens, her voice gayest, her laughter that of healthiest, happiest youth.

No, it was to be broken quietly to Faith after the trial was over—told her in a careful way. Meanwhile, no one of the three people who knew of Jo's presence in Ashfield suspected for one instant what was really likeliest to happen—that quietly and from some secluded part of the court-room Faith would be a spectator of the summing up of a trial in which she had so keen an interest. Perhaps only a girl in Faith Emerson's position could have gone that day so quietly, and with a chaperon, too, for Miss Grace was persuaded easily enough into accompanying her.

So Faith and Jo really set out unconsciously to meet each other at the same hour.

Mr. Burton came for Jo in a carriage, and as they were driven to the court-room he gave her a few words of general advice as to what she ought to do and say;

but Mr. Hogencamp and Bertie had both urged that the girl be left to give her testimony in her own way; and that Mr. Burton's most impressive remarks fell rather short of their purpose was proven by the way in which Jo turned and asked, seriously,

"Will she be there, sir—Miss Faith, I mean?" showing that this seemed to her of more importance than almost anything else; but the fact was that Jo would have wished to spare Faith's beholding her public disgrace.

The usual crowd had collected about the court-house, and Jo, had she thought of such a thing, would have recognized some of her old friends among them, but she saw or heard nothing clearly—all seemed in a sort of maze until she found herself in a room adjoining the court, and some one, it seemed to be Mr. Bertie Farnham, speaking to her.

"You mustn't be frightened, Jo," he was saying, his honest young face full of compassion. "You are to wait here, you know, until you are called in for your turn."

"Yes, Mr. Bertie," said Jo, quietly.

She took the seat they gave her mechanically, folded her hands, and waited.

The shuffling in of the crowd, the sounds that told of the opening of the court, the monotonous voices of the officials, reached Jo as she sat there like the voices and

sounds of a dream. Then at last Mr. Hogencamp's clerk and Bertie appeared. Jo rose at once to her feet, knowing instinctively that her time had come.

In another moment she found herself being almost lifted into the witness-box, where for one instant she stood still, looking about her in a stony, terrified way. The faces of the crowd seemed swaying back and forth. The judge and jury, the lawyers and clerks and reporters, all seemed blending in a sort of mist, out of which Jo, trying to steady her gaze, gradually defined the yellow locks and freckled face of her old foe, Sandy—the lad whose life she had come here to save—who would doubtless jeer at her on her way to prison on the morrow.

One awful moment of a sort of despair came over her as she met his sullen though panic-stricken gaze. What might have followed, Jo used to wonder later, had it not been that almost at the same moment her glance shifted, seemed to drift across the sea of faces, to meet one look—an earnest, joyous, solemn look—straight from Faith's eyes into her own.

CHAPTER XXII.

FAITH and her aunt had found themselves compelled to take rather prominent seats among the audience in the court-room at Ashfield, but several ladies of the town were there, for young Moxon had once been an interesting boy to many samaritans in the place, and moreover the trial was of consequence, because it had brought to light various of the small robberies which had been puzzling the community for a long time previous to the famous 30th of May.

Mrs. Keith fondly hoped to recover—how she did not know—a long-lost enamel brooch, with her great aunt's hair in the back of it; and Bertie Farnham, anxious to have Jo's return create the proper sort of excitement, had assured her the day before she ought to be present. Also, this ingenious youth had impressed the fact upon the Barkers, Applebys, and Colvilles, so that when Faith and Miss Grace entered, many of their North Street neighbors greeted them with that mixture of solemnity and disapproval which they considered fitting such an occasion.

Mrs. Keith leaned across Kitty Barker to whisper to Faith,

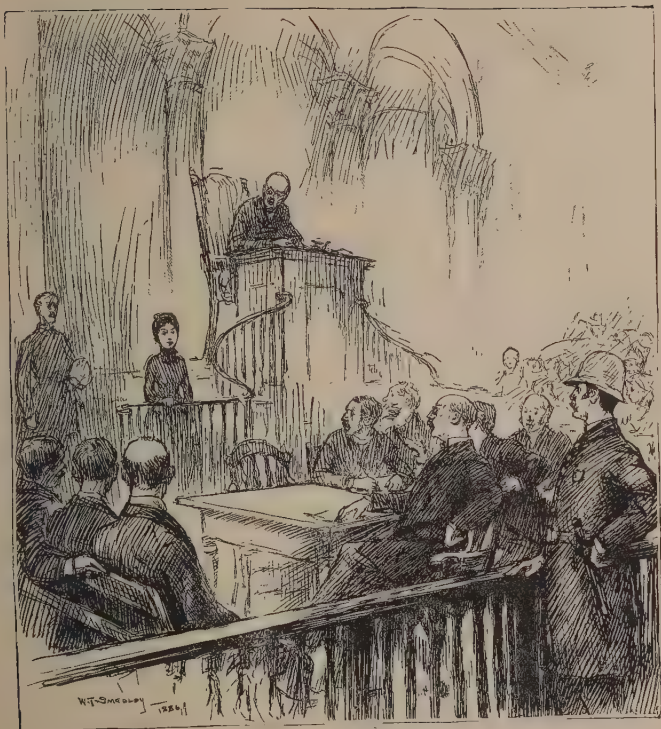
"Bertie Farnham says there is to be a new witness from Burnham, a very interesting one too, a young girl who has something special to tell."

Faith smiled and nodded in reply, then followed the usual opening of the case, the examination of some final witnesses for the prosecution, during which time Sandy's wretched countenance grew more and more dejected.

It would have been hard not to pity him, in spite of his misguided youth, his defiant, careless conduct. Brought to trial for his life, the lad was completely stunned and terrified, and for the first time in his remembrance a sense of disgrace had come over him, which, mingled with the fear of the scaffold, had wrought a change in every line of the boy's dull face.

From the first he had no hope, for the fact that the "p'leece" had actually caught him; that he was on trial for murder; that his record in Ashfield was so poor a one, was enough to convince one of his weak mind that every one was bent on hanging him, and there "wasn't no one as 'ud say a good word."

He had thought of Jo, but he knew that she too had escaped from Ashfield, and he rejoiced in the fact, for that she would do anything to help him out of trouble never once had occurred to his mind. Such generosity, and from a girl, he could not have understood. Had



"EVERY EYE WAS FIXED UPON THE GIRL AS SHE STOOD THERE."

Sandy forgotten that with all her rough, wild ways, Jo Markham had always been the "champion" of Sailors' Row? When had the distressed or imposed upon, be it child or dog or even half-starved cat, come to her in vain? And the childish days of Sailors' Row were past; the "new witness" who stood so still and white in the little box, gazing fixedly at poor Sandy, was another being.

Bertie had tried to give Faith a quiet word of preparation, as soon as he had perceived her between Kitty Barker and her aunt, but it had only bewildered her; then had followed the preliminary of introducing a new witness. Straining her gaze Faith saw the little side door opened and a tall girl come in at Mr. Burton's side, but a moment had gone by before she fully understood that the neatly clad young figure, the fair, thin face and large dark eyes belonged to no other than her long-lost Jo.

Every eye was fixed upon the girl as she stood there, with that mute appeal in her gaze, which, however, no one understood as coming from her fear that she would not be believed; but only Faith's eyes met hers with recognition.

The questioning began. What was her name?

Jo faltered an instant, but said, in a low, clear voice,
"Josephine Mary Brooke."

"How old?"

"Sixteen last month, sir; born in Bayberry. Father was in the United States navy; both parents dead" (in answer to questions).

She was to state, if she pleased, her knowledge of the events of the 30th of May, 187—.

The color flamed into Jo's face for an instant, deep as the very heart of a damask rose, and as quickly faded, leaving the girl whiter than before; but her voice, low as it was, faltering sometimes, and with that suppressed note of a sob in it once or twice, went on, reaching every listener; her eyes gradually drifting—as they all remembered later—for the most part away from Faith, away from the audience, judge, and jury, towards the open window, beyond which was a stretch of the lovely country and the line of the shining summer sea.

"Miss Emerson knows, I think, sir," Jo said, looking for a moment at the lawyer who had questioned her, "that I went to her school a long time, and she was very good to me, and I was sick once for five weeks, I think, at her house. So I knew all the ways of the house—that is, where her rooms were, you know.

"I was up there one day—it must have been that 30th of May you were talking about, sir—and I was with Miss Faith in a little hall where she had shelves for different things. I had been helping her put labels on some jars. We were talking, and I remember—" for a second Jo's glance sought Faith's, resting there while she smiled

faintly—"she said I was very small for my age. I was working at the window-sash at the time, and I said it seemed very loose."

"Did any one interrupt your conversation?"

Mr. Hogencamp put this question.

"Yes, sir; Mary, the cook, came and talked about the dinner-party. I don't remember much more of that day, except that we put flowers in the dining-room, and I saw Miss Faith dressed for the party."

Jo paused, with a slight quiver of her lip.

"At what hour do you think you left the house?"

The lawyer put the question very gently.

"It was about six o'clock, I think, sir, for I know I met some of the mill-hands going home. I met George Moxon."

The very mention of the name sent a thrill through the whole court-room.

"I met him at the corner of the bridge."

"How did he seem?"

"He was in a bad temper, I thought. He stopped me, and asked me if I knew where Sandy Martin or his father were. I said I didn't. I remember his saying he'd find Sandy before night. I was in a hurry, and I went right on. Shall I tell you, please, just as I did Mr. Burton?"

"Go right on; tell all that you remember from that point until the next morning."

Jo steadied herself, putting one hand on the railing before her, and then went on.

“ When I got home I glanced in the window, and saw three men at the table talking. My grandfather was in his own chair by the fire. I knew the men ; they were Ryerson and Tucker and Job Martin. I knew they couldn't mean any good. I can't remember just what I heard them say ; it was something about ‘ to-night being the best for the game.’ I slipped around to the back of the house until they went away, and then I went in, and asked grandfather what he let them come there for. He put me off, but said something about Miss Emerson having fine jewellery and silver and such like, and somehow it frightened me. I felt almost sure harm was meant. I was up-stairs in my room all the evening. I heard the men come back, and they talked a great deal, and I heard them ask if grandfather thought I'd ‘ help the job along,’ and he said no — he knew I wouldn't. Then he said he'd go up-stairs and see if I was asleep. I got in under the clothes, for I was afraid if he found me up something dreadful would happen. He came to the door and looked in. I kept my eyes shut, and—and prayed he wouldn't catch me or beat me. He went down, after looking in for a minute ; and then, I don't know how it was, I turned sick and faint, like I used to get up at Miss Emerson's. Seemed as if I must have fallen asleep or something. When I did rouse up it was

a great deal later. The men had gone and come back again. I knew they meant mischief for Miss Emerson, for I'd heard words about the party going on there. I watched out of the window in my room, and when I saw them all stealing out of the house I slipped down and out of the door, and I crept after them."

Jo paused again. It seemed to her as though she was once more speeding along in the darkness that long-ago summer's night; once more trembling as she shrunk into a door-way, or watched the three figures stealthily walking on ahead of her.

"They went up the old beach road," Jo continued, "and I followed as near as I dared. Just before they reached the corner, where the road goes down the cliff, one of the men stood still. It was Job Martin. I was afraid he was going to turn back, but he only stood still while the others went slowly on. I hung back, afraid of Job's seeing me. Then I saw he was waiting for some one. It was a bright night, and where I stood I could see everything plainly. I saw George Moxon and Sandy Martin come up the cliff together."

The silence in the court-room was such that the sound of Jo's voice seemed to grow more and more distinct. The sunshine outside, and the distant echoes from the street; the shadows flickering from a maple-tree near the window at one end of the room—all seemed fixed afterwards upon Faith's mind as belonging to just that

moment; and when she thought of it there seemed to her something solemn in the face and figure of the girl who was making this anxious silence—for all of Jo's heart and soul seemed to come into her voice and eyes as she went on, only striving to make her story believed and to save Sandy's life.

"Sandy spoke to his father. I could not hear all that he said, but he spoke of some yacht, and Job answered, angrily, I think, he hadn't anything to do with it. I distinctly heard Moxon say, 'You're bent on other game,' and Job seemed to draw him one side to whisper. They went down the cliff together."

"And Sandy Martin?"

"Sandy stood still a moment and then joined the others. I knew, from what I heard them say later, that Job had told him to tell them to wait at the cross-roads for him."

"Did they wait?"

"I think they may have waited two minutes—not more."

"Did anything happen?"

"I thought I heard low voices below the cliff, and I ran on a little way. I thought I could get around by the side road ahead of the men, and alarm the house, but as I was turning off my foot caught in something and I fell. The men saw me. It took about a minute for me to get up again, and—I don't know how it came

into my head—but I thought all of a sudden of a plan.”

Jo looked at Faith, and quickly away again.

“I remembered the loose window in the hall. I tried to speak in the roughest way, like they were used to with me, and I said I could help ’em into the house a better way than they had thought of.”

Any one watching the prisoner’s face would have seen, by the way it lighted from time to time, that his memory confirmed every statement Jo made; but the eyes of the two rarely met. Jo went on, a little hurriedly,

“I thought if I got into the house, you see, any sort of way, I could rush and alarm every one at once; so I went on, and kept pretending to be friendly. I was friendly even to Sandy.” The color came and went again in Jo’s white cheeks. “Every one knew how I fought with him; we were never good friends; every one in the Row knew that. I told them of the window, and I said if they’d help me in I could unfasten the side door. I remember I laughed, and said it was a good thing after all I was so little of my age. We were near the orchard gate then, and once in a while Sandy spoke to me or I to him. Once, I know, he said it was a mean job, and he wouldn’t have anything to do with it, if he was me. I remember what he said particularly,” continued Jo, looking intently at Mr. Hogenkamp’s anxious,

kindly face, "because it made me feel so horrible even to seem to be doing anything mean or to hurt her. I said to Sandy, why didn't he give it up, and he said he would only he was afraid of his father. I remember he said he had tried to get off, but he daren't show his face to his father if he did; but he declared he wouldn't touch a thing once we were in the house."

As Jo spoke, it was strange to all the rest to see the face of her old enemy grow pale and red, and soften in a way that, had she seen it, would have helped her; but, as I have said, Jo rarely looked at him. But if any one doubted her words, they had the confirmation straight before their eyes, in the changes passing across Sandy's haggard countenance.

"When we got to the window," Jo went on, hurriedly, "they easily opened it. I was in great haste to be in; but we were startled, I remember, by the striking of the stable clock."

There was a pause, a breathless silence for an instant, until Mr. Hogencamp said, bending eagerly forward,

"What hour did it strike?"

"One o'clock; I remember it was just one stroke."

"And then?"

"The next thing I remember is Ryerson lifting me in the window, and seeing Peters come in the door at the end of the passage."

Jo waited. She knew well enough that the main

point of her evidence in Sandy's favor had been given. While the lawyers talked together, while a low murmur of comment, suggestion, exclamation, etc., went around the court-room, she sat down in the chair placed for her and rested her head upon her hand. She wondered, in a dreary sort of way, what was to come next. They knew, she supposed, how no one of those who had crowded around her that night would allow her to speak—how she had been hurried off to jail. Was it necessary for her to tell the rest?

Jo raised her eyes, and looking for the first time to the left of the court-room met an unexpected sight.

Mrs. Dawson and Rachel and Mrs. Burton sat together—anxiety, interest, on all three faces; so far no horror or contempt of her. But oh, now came the worst of all! Must she go on, and be to these dear friends disgraced forever?

CHAPTER XXIII.

“**W**HERE then,” said the voice of Mr. Hogencamp, bringing Jo back to her task again—“where did you last see Alexander Martin?”

“He was by the window among the men, but he had disappeared before they took me away. I believe no one at Miss Emerson’s knew he had been there.”

“Do you remember giving him anything to hold for you?”

Jo reflected.

“As I was being lifted in,” she said, slowly, “I think the handkerchief I had tied around my ankle, where I hurt it, came off. I think I remember Sandy’s picking it up.”

“Describe it.”

Jo did so. The lawyers exchanged glances.

“Exactly as he describes it,” assented one of the jurymen, who had been listening with great enjoyment and interest to Jo’s story.

“He was gone,” Jo went on, in answer to a cross-examining question. “I never saw him since until to-day.”

"I believe"—this from the State lawyer—"I believe you spent the next day in jail?"

Jo spoke clearly, but in a low voice.

"Yes, sir. She came—Miss Emerson. I told her I never meant to harm her. I told her how it was."

There was a silence; then Jo said,

"She promised to believe me, but she said no one else in all Ashfield would."

"And so, when Miss Emerson obtained your release, you ran away?"

Jo could not lift her eyes. She said,

"Yes, sir;" and then added, "I knew I'd only bother and vex her. I couldn't stay and be in jail, and know I'd never meant to hurt her; but that every one would laugh at her and bother her for being good to me." The dark sad eyes of the girl were raised now. They seemed to hold burning tears, though none fell on her white cheeks. "I couldn't do it. I thought it would be better to go away where she'd never, never need to know."

"And did you hear nothing of Moxon being murdered?"

"No, sir. The day they let me out of jail I didn't stir from the house. That night I ran away."

Again came one of the pauses during which sounds and sights grew painfully bewildering. Had Jo understood the case, known more than that the main point at issue was the proof that Sandy Martin, and not his fa-

ther, was with the burglars at one o'clock that night, she would have understood that they were all favorably impressed, and discussing what should be done next; that a general air of relief pervaded the court-room; that some one had leaned over and whispered a word in Sandy's ear which made the young man's rough face kindle with joy. But to Jo it all seemed only a painful waiting for some sort of sentence to be pronounced upon herself.

It was something of a relief when she was told to leave the box, when some one led her out into the next room. There it was she might sit down until she was needed again.

She went instinctively to the window, sat down, and being left alone a moment, crossed her arms upon the sill and leaned her head wearily upon them. All that she cared for now, it seemed to her, was to be taken away soon, to have it all over, to know the worst. But her head ached; her eyes were tired with the confusion of faces, the glare of the sun, the holding back those hot tears which hung upon her eyelids, now were all but falling down her cheeks.

When she was summoned back for a slight further cross-examination she saw at once that Faith and Miss Grace had disappeared, and it was harder to speak without the protecting sense of her nearness; but the fact was that the day had proven almost too much for Faith.

When Jo was dismissed the first time Miss Emerson had been called upon for such testimony as she could give which would corroborate Jo's story, but immediately afterwards Dr. Wraxall had peremptorily ordered her home.

The time of waiting seemed interminable to Faith. Bertie had promised to bring her the earliest news of the verdict, which, it was supposed, would be rendered without difficulty that day; but the afternoon was well advanced before Faith, lying on the sofa in the library, heard her cousin's step, quick, elastic, impatient. Almost before he entered she knew what he had to say.

"Not guilty! Faith," he exclaimed, joyfully. "And oh, isn't it fine, as you said once our Jo did it!"

And Bertie turned away towards the window, half ashamed of the tears that sprang into his eyes.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FAITH sat up, tremulous and excited.

“Oh, Bertie,” she said, softly, “where is she? I do so want to see her!”

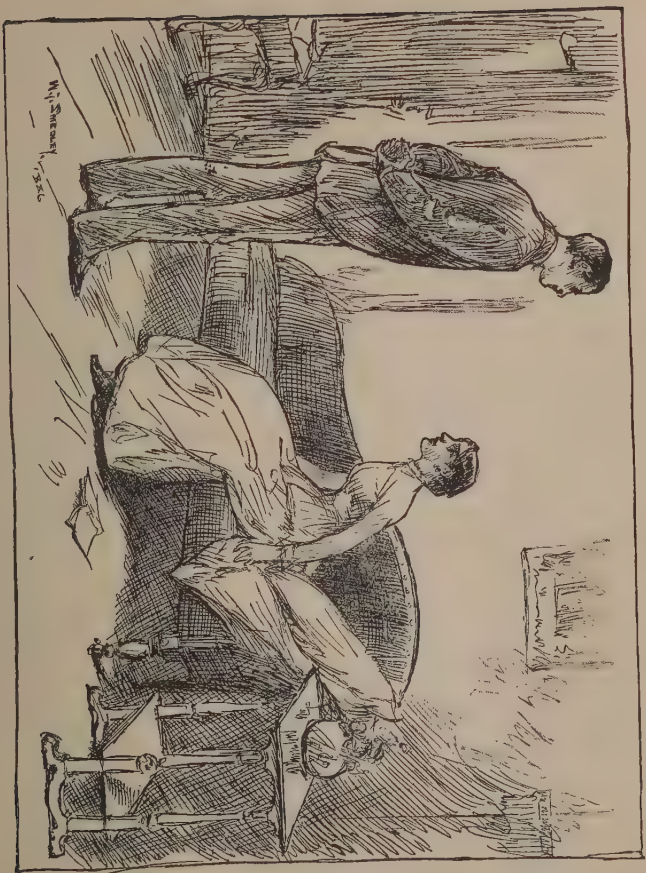
The lad came forward at once.

“And so you shall, dear,” he answered, “very soon; let me tell you first all that happened. Have you had anything to eat?” Bertie of late had constituted himself general monitor of the household where Faith’s needs were concerned. “Now, if I send for your tea in here, will you take it comfortably? and I’ll tell you all about it.”

Faith assented; very soon a cosy little tray was spread before her, and Bertie, sometimes sitting down, sometimes pacing the floor slowly, told the story.

The Dawsons and Mrs. Burton had been telegraphed for early in the day, and after Jo’s final cross-examination Mrs. Dawson gave her testimony.

“I wish you could have heard it, Faith,” said the boy, smiling at the recollection. “It was nearly impossible to keep her to the point, she was so anxious to eulogize Jo. She related how they met; how Jo nursed her



“AND SO YOU SHALL, DEAR, BERTIE ANSWERED, ‘VERY SOON.’”

daughter; she pointed Miss Rachel out to the jury and they nearly overwhelmed the poor girl; and how Mary Brooks, as she kept calling her, was the smartest, tidiest worker she'd ever known, and the best girl with the children; as for her own Jo, the baby, it was fretting itself sick for her now. Well, the upshot of it was that Mrs. Dawson impressed the jury very finely, but Mr. Burton in his quiet, forcible way did more. He told of Jo's coming voluntarily to him, and offering to testify on Sandy's behalf, and he added what I never had suspected."

Bertie smiled thoughtfully.

"What?" queried Faith.

"Why, that Jo was fully convinced that by giving her testimony she ran the risk of being thrown at once into prison herself for running away. He brought it all in so that it wouldn't be objected to as testimony, but I assure you that it told well, for no girl would run such a risk unless for a good cause; and as she said herself, every one knew Sandy and she were not friends."

"And where was Jo all this time?"

"She had asked to be allowed to go out into the ante-room again; and do you know, Faith, I don't think the girl has the least idea what she is to do now. I never saw anything so humble and gentle as she seems. Those Dawsons must be capital sort of people," the boy added, breaking off suddenly.

Faith's eyes were shining.

"I just want to see them," she answered, and then—"But Bertie, if Jo hadn't, as you once said, the real grit in her, she never would have found and made such friends; and only think, if she had not done so well, tried so hard, and been so worthy, her testimony now would have gone for nothing, and Jo would have lost forever her great opportunity. I've often thought we all have just one really great opportunity in our lives to take or miss, or to lose."

"Or perhaps not see at all," said Bertie, in a low tone.

"Perhaps; but I think if we make ourselves ready, as poor Jo unconsciously was doing all that year at Burnham, we'll not lose sight of opportunities when they come. God keeps them waiting, I fancy, Bertie, for our ready moments. He lets us have the will and the desire to prepare ourselves, so that we, poor things, may get all the merit possible! Ah, Bertie!"—Faith lying back among her pillows put her arms up, clasping her hands above her head and looking over to the tall, boyish figure in the window—"do you know what I have thought lately?"

Bertie's face was turned swiftly towards Faith; the boy had learned of late to note every change, every hint of meaning in Faith's voice, words, or looks. So seldom, however, would she speak of herself, that he

caught eagerly at any suggestion of a mood likely to be personal.

"I think," she went on, with her softest smile, "my opportunity is nearly ready. I am not quite fit for it though just yet!"

"What, Faith?" Bertie was startled by something in her voice and eyes.

"I think I know what it is to be, Bertie, dear. Perhaps I ought not to trouble you with my fancies, but Jo was the beginning of it; I wonder if she will help me at the end?"

"Faith!" cried the boy, passionately. He knew now what she meant. Oh, were they all blind? did none of them see the feet of God's messenger coming slowly but surely? And she, in her gentle, girlish heart and soul, she had felt the "fragrance of the winged ones" as they came. She had known it, and was striving to be patient, to be ready.

"Faith!" cried Bertie. He knelt down by his cousin's side and Faith stroked the curly, boyish locks as tenderly as though he were a child, instead of a lad only two years younger than herself.

"Don't talk and look like that! You mustn't! Opportunities, indeed;" he lifted his eyes with a show of indignation in them; "why, your whole life is full of them—and you're always ready."

But Faith only smiled and shook her head.

"The real one is coming, Bertie," she answered—"there now; don't be dismal any more. I want to see Jo."

Bertie rose to his feet.

"Jo is here, Faith," he said, quietly; "they made me promise not to bring her in for half an hour."

"Oh, go quickly," cried Faith.

She rose, stood still in the centre of the room, her heart beating with pleasure while Bertie was gone.

And so it chanced that Jo came back to Faith to find her almost as she remembered her last, standing in her beautiful room—the late sunshine of a summer evening falling about her, touching her white gown, her soft brown hair, her tranquil smile, and seeming to linger in the little cross shining at her neck.

But oh how really different was this tall, grave-eyed girl, Jo Markham!

Faith went forward swiftly with out-stretched hands—with eyes lighted through a mist of tears—with happy, parted lips.

"Jo," she cried, tremulously. She took the girl tenderly in her arms and held her closely for a moment. "Oh Jo, dear," she said, softly, "thank God for it all! I am so happy! so glad!"

CHAPTER XXV.

PERHAPS it will be hard for any one to understand how entirely Jo believed that she would be immediately sent back to prison ; but even when Bertie took her up to North Street she concluded that by some one's kind interference she was allowed that much freedom, but that probably the next day would see her behind those dreadful doors again. The impression many people, brought up as Jo had been, had of the mercilessness of the law, was made more emphatic in her case by her own and Sandy Martin's experience ; so, as she drove through Ashfield to North Street by Bertie's side, it was hard for her to respond to his cheerful, satisfied mood. She knew she had done right ; she felt sure Faith would think so, but it was difficult to have the lad's good spirits, or even be specially glad to know that Sandy had been completely overcome by what his ancient foe had done for him.

When Bertie fully realized Jo's frame of mind he determined that Faith should have the pleasure of undeceiving her. Jo could bear a little more misery for the sake of the peace that was to come.

Miss Grace welcomed the girl cordially. Her doubts of Jo had begun to melt on the first sight of Jo's neat altered appearance, the steadfast simplicity of her young face, and as her story progressed the good old lady had been filled with dismay and remorse for her own part in Jo's too prompt imprisonment; so, while Bertie went to Faith, Aunt Justina took Jo up into her own sitting-room, a real sanctum sanctorum, where they both grew friendly over a talk in which Jo's life at the Dawson's was the chief topic.

Mrs. Burton's good-will and interest in Jo was another open-sesame to Miss Grace's heart, and Jo was really an interesting person now—no longer rude, or ragged, or rebellious—a quiet figure, neatly dressed, sitting quite properly on one end of Aunt Justina's best plush-covered lounge, and speaking in a well-modulated if rather timid voice. A little bad grammar more or less; a slight dulness about catching all Miss Grace's suggestions, made really very little difference! "Mary Brooke" was on the whole quite a commendable young person, and Miss Justina was just revolving in her mind a plan for sending her to an excellent institution, of which she was patroness, when Faith's summons came.

Half an hour later Faith and Jo were still alone in the library, Jo talking for the most part; her thoughts set free now by what Faith had told her.


"Then they won't send me back, Miss Faith?" Jo had said, in startled surprise. Faith took time and gentlest words to re-assure her on this point, and gradually it was impressed fully on Jo's mind.

Words came freely after a little while. Jo felt the comfort of being able to say all that she had kept pent up within her heart and mind so long, and Faith's sympathy was all she needed to draw her on.

At last Bertie appeared; and following him the Burtons, mother and son, who had been invited to tea; Bertie having in his character of master of ceremonies promised that Jo should go back to the hotel for supper with the rest of the Burnham party.

By this time Mrs. Joyce had discovered whose eyes Jo's were like, and had entered into a confidential talk with Mrs. Dawson about Jo's mother, whom she had known well.

"Just the smartest, bonniest lass you ever saw," Mrs. Joyce said to her guests while they waited Jo's coming. "Well do I mind the day of her wedding. I lived in Bayberry then; my man was in the provision business and I had dress-making, and this other Josephine Mary—Markham, her name was—was my best hand. Young Brooke was quite the gentleman. His people, some of them, are out in Bayberry now. I shouldn't wonder if they could be made to take notice of the girl. Poor dear!"



And much more would have ensued had not Jo just then appeared; still rather timid and shy, but with a happy look on her face as she greeted her old friends heartily.

Rachel could not ask or say enough; Mrs. Dawson was equally talkative and interested; the Joyces felt they had a distinguished guest, and altogether the supper-table set in the landlady's own parlor presented a very cheerful picture when, about nine o'clock, Bertie looked in upon them to say his cousin wanted Jo to come to North Street for the night.

"And this is Mrs. Dawson, I suppose, and Miss Rachel?" the lad said, in his friendly way, shaking hands with the visitors. "My cousin wants very much to have you stay over to-morrow and spend the day with her. She is not strong, you know," Bertie added with quick gravity, "and so she thought unless you could stay all day there wouldn't be a chance for her to see enough of you, for she has to rest a great deal."

"Eh! poor young lady," said Mrs. Joyce, when the Dawsons had expressed their ready satisfaction and thanks, "it's failing fast enough she is, Master Bertie!"

The look of quick pain that came into the boy's face was not unobserved by Jo.

When they were out walking along the country road towards North Street, she said, earnestly,

"Mr. Bertie, is she so very bad—is she—"

Jo could not finish her sentence.

Bertie stood still a moment and looked at Jo in the moonlight.

"Jo," he said, "we must value every hour with her, I believe." The lad turned away. "God wants her. I believe she is going away very soon."

CHAPTER XXVI.

IT was perhaps as well for Faith as for Jo that when the various plans for the latter's future began to be discussed, and everybody was ready with suggestions and advice, that Bertie stepped in to point out to them all, in a quiet, forcible way, that Faith ought to be let alone to do precisely as she liked.

"Can't you see, Aunt Justina," he said, almost angrily, one day, when Miss Grace had been unusually energetic in her counsel, "Faith wants to have Jo quietly to herself just for these days."

"What days, Bertrand?" said his aunt.

But Bertie could say no more. If they all persisted in being blind, then he could do nothing, thought the boy, whose heart was full to the brim of loneliness and the ache of parting with his dearest cousin and companion.

The Dawsons had spent what Rachel called a "royal day" at North Street. Jo was already reinstated in her own little cheerful room up-stairs, again in her hall-window, and Rachel was delighted to sit there with her friend and hear about that other summer. The big

apple-tree, beneath which she had first sat with Faith, seemed to have unexpectedly acquired something sacred in Jo's eyes, and she hardly liked lingering there with Rachel as they strolled about the grounds; but the gardens and terraces were free to them that bright summer's day, and Jo already knew enough of what Faith designed for her to be able to talk it over with Rachel. For the present she was to remain at North Street.

"I'm to take care of her, Miss Faith says," Jo explained, "and perhaps do some lessons."

Rachel was greatly interested. Her mind, more imaginative than Jo's, already took in visions of a very luxurious and romantic future, wherein Jo would figure as Miss Emerson's heiress or adopted sister, or something equally like the heroines of the romances in the Burnham circulating library. But, happily for Jo, she contemplated no such unreality; happily, too, for her, Faith had wiser and kinder plans.

Mr. Burton, Bertie, and she held a long council. The former told them every possible thing he knew of Jo's life in Burnham, and when alone with the kind-hearted friend, Faith spoke freely of her intentions. She wanted very soon to talk of them to Jo—to be able to plan with her for the time when she must be away. Such counsels, Faith felt instinctively, would never be forgotten.

"Let her alone in it," Mr. Burton said one day to the old doctor. "Don't you see how it has taken hold of

her; and it's the best thing that could happen to Mary Brooke, or Jo, as you call her."

So Bertie's counsel was allowed to take effect. No one interfered with anything but words of sympathy; and Faith lying on her sofa, not suffering very much, tranquil and quiet for the most part, made her plans, shaped her legacy, moulded the little corner-stone on which Jo's future could be built.

"My little opportunity!" she said one day to Jo, smiling, and drawing the girl's face down to kiss it—"that's what you are to me, Jo, my dear."

And she told her something of what she and Bertie had said that other evening.

"There are so many things for us to talk about, Jo," she added; "these days seem to go by so soon. I'll tell you what we'll do. Thursday will be the school-day for Burnham here, won't it? well, then, do you know I think I'll get Mr. Burton to come up the day before, and we'll have a good talk before the company arrives, and settle everything. I want you to know just how I should like things to be done afterwards."

Always thoughtful of others, Faith tried to make her companion used to the final parting; but Jo could not, dared not face the thought. The look of dumb agony always in her face made Faith half dread to speak of it, yet she felt it best, most tender and most kind, and for her sake Jo tried to listen with patience and silence.



“ MY LITTLE OPPORTUNITY ; THAT’S WHAT YOU ARE TO ME, JO. ”

They all knew it now. The slight hold on life which Faith had tried so hard to make firmer seemed to be loosening every day, and the prayer which had been so often in her heart for patience and resignation—conformity to God's will—rarely came now to her lips. He had answered it in His own way. She felt that she had faced her "opportunity," and not let it pass.

It was enough. The twenty years of life, the gayety, the joyousness, the work, the striving after her Master's final precepts, the humility and sweetness, the final crowning act of all, the giving up of life itself, were laid now at His feet, an offering worthy of Him who had placed her here; and those who were near her, day by day, seemed as they said sometimes to each other to see the light of all that had been lovely in that life shining in her eyes, or quivering in the smile with which she always greeted them. It was as though some great and unexpected gift had reached her; as though some unearthly yet joyous messenger had left the glory of His coming to light her and those around her while she stayed.

Jo rarely left her. If care, if thought, if love could have kept her, Jo would have done it all, but at last it seemed to the girl as though nothing earthly could in any way avail; all that seemed left for her to do was to be patient and to wait.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FAITH entered heartily into the spirit of the school treat. Not a detail which concerned the comfort or amusement of her guests escaped her thoughts, and every one seemed anxious to assist her one way or another. Her own "children," whom Faith saw now only as rare visitors, were to be present, under Jo and Miss Kitty Barker's special surveillance, and when Mr. Burton came, Faith had a favor to ask of him.

He listened gravely.

"Will it tire you, my dear?" he said, for what Faith wanted then was to have a little talk with Sandy.

The lad after some further investigations had been set free, and since then Bertie had found employment for him; but Faith knew that he wanted to go away from Ashfield, and she believed Mr. Burton could suggest a way.

He could, and did.

A first class boat-builder at Bayberry was ready to take him in, knowing his history, but willing to give the lad a trial, and Sandy had professed himself delighted with the chance,

Jo had never seen Sandy to speak with him since the trial ended, but on this evening Faith sent for her to her own little sitting-room, where the lad, not yet recovered from the effects of the terrible ordeal he had gone through, was sitting quietly by Miss Emerson's sofa.

They had had their talk: Faith had told the boy gravely what she had left in Mr. Burton's power to do for him. If he did well while he remained with the boat-builder he was to be started in business for himself.

Softened and subdued by Faith's words, Sandy met Jo with a quiet, respectful manner.

Jo's hand was quickly out-stretched. Sandy took it in his own rough palm, and drew the back of the other hand across his eyes.

"You were—good to me, Jo," he said, huskily. "I didn't thank you—I couldn't right there—but I do now."

And so at Faith's side the feud was forever ended. Sandy's good-bye was a hurried one; but when he went out into the lightly falling summer rain the lad flung himself upon the ground, and shook in an agony of silent weeping. So Bertie Farnham, coming up heavy-hearted enough to the house found him, did not venture to disturb him, but later remembered it, and knew why it had been.

Faith was very anxious for a bright day and it came. The Burnham company were assembled by eleven o'clock, but the young hostess of the occasion could only watch them from her sofa in the library, drawn into the big bow-window, when she looked out contentedly and happy at the gayly flitting young people, the animated groups, the attitudes of sociable ease into which the elder ones fell. Jo hated to be away from her, yet went hither and thither at her bidding, glad, however, when at seven o'clock all was over, and she and Faith were alone up-stairs in the former's room.

A fire was lighted on the hearth, for it had begun to rain again, and the evening was chill. Faith on her sofa, Jo on a low stool in the firelight, were silent for a while, and then Faith told her what she wanted her to do.

She was to live if she liked at Mr. Burton's, to study, and then— Faith smiled.

"Do you remember, Jo," she said, "what it was you once said long ago you wanted?"

Jo's cheek flushed.

"The training-school, Miss Faith."

"Yes—when you are ready, and if you still care for it, you can learn to be a nurse. Not just to care any sort of way for the sick, Jo, but to be a real nurse—carer of bodies, and souls perhaps—to do all, and with all your heart, that you can, dear."

In a moment Faith spoke again.

“Whatever you take up must be a good work, Jo, and there will always be money enough for you to be able to give some of your time to the sick and needy, to have, perhaps, charge of a little home Mr. Burton is to found for my children.”

It was told so simply, and added to by such simple, gentle words of counsel, that it was hard to feel how much it all meant. Afterwards they sat together talking for an hour of different things, and finally Faith bade Jo good-night, if more tenderly, or with a firmer pressure of the hand than usual, it would seem but to have been natural after what had passed between them.

Once—Jo was glad of this—she came back to the room without Faith’s knowing it, stood in the door-way, and looked in upon her friend. Jane was dozing in her chair by the fire; Faith was still upon her couch, and her eyes were fixed upon the picture of Gethsemane, which she had asked, one day not long before, to have brought down there from the school. The firelight showed Jo both faces: that of the Master’s, heart-stricken, anguished, and alone; that of His child’s, peaceful after her toil, waiting for the sound of her name, “spoken from afar.”

Faith’s hand was resting on the cross always at her neck—the cross Jo had promised her always to keep—it moved slightly; it was folded in the other gently, and

with a little sigh. And it was so they found her at day-break: the earthly tenement deserted, the answer to the Master's summons given, her work ended, her "opportunity" come.

As you turn down Mill Street, in Burnham, and just beyond Mrs. Dawson's comfortable store, a pretty gabled house attracts every one's attention. It is on high ground, with a lawn and gardens, and at the back the most luxurious of orchards and a sort of "romping-ground" for children. Every one in or around Burnham knows the place. "Faith's Cottage" it is called, although the rambling, pretty house deserves, some think, a more dignified name; but it was Jo's wish, when she was installed as head-nurse last year, that no change should be made, although wings and a dormitory were added, and room made for twenty more crippled or invalid children.

Faith's legacy founded the house. Jo is head of it—an active, energetic, though thoughtful Jo nowadays—her tall, vigorous young frame suiting the life of pleasant though constant toil, and her nature showing every day more and more capacity for helping the little ones under her care.

Young Jo Dawson thinks there is no such home anywhere as the "Cottage," and would, I am inclined to think, break a leg or an arm any day for the sake of

having "Aunt Jo," as the children call her, take care of her; but Aunt Jo gives her little namesake all the petting possible, thankful she is not one of her crippled charges.

Everything is bright and fresh and wholesome about Faith's Cottage. Mr. Burton and his mother enjoy many pleasant days there; Bertie Farnham takes his own little daughter Faith over very often to see the place and Aunt Jo and her charges, and the Dawsons are regular visitors; while a tall, stalwart boatman named Martin gives a treat often to those among the little cottagers who can go out in summer weather.

Perhaps it is when Jo feels happiest, when the work Faith left her to do is prospering most surely, that her thoughts are the tenderest of the past. At such moments, almost instinctively, her hands touch the little cross which she wears always, though hidden from sight, and she tells her children something of the one who led her to meet her first "opportunity."

THE END.

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function $f(x)$ defined by the equation

$$f(x) = \int_0^x \frac{1}{1+t^2} dt, \quad (1)$$

where x is a real number. It is well known that this function is increasing and concave down on the interval $(-\infty, \infty)$. Moreover, it is easy to see that $f(x) \rightarrow 0$ as $x \rightarrow -\infty$ and $f(x) \rightarrow \frac{\pi}{2}$ as $x \rightarrow \infty$.

2. In the second part of the paper, we shall study the properties of the function $g(x)$ defined by the equation

$$g(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t}{1+t^2} dt, \quad (2)$$

where x is a real number. It is well known that this function is increasing and concave up on the interval $(-\infty, \infty)$. Moreover, it is easy to see that $g(x) \rightarrow 0$ as $x \rightarrow -\infty$ and $g(x) \rightarrow \frac{\pi}{2}$ as $x \rightarrow \infty$.

3. In the third part of the paper, we shall study the properties of the function $h(x)$ defined by the equation

$$h(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^2}{1+t^2} dt, \quad (3)$$

where x is a real number. It is well known that this function is increasing and concave down on the interval $(-\infty, \infty)$. Moreover, it is easy to see that $h(x) \rightarrow 0$ as $x \rightarrow -\infty$ and $h(x) \rightarrow \frac{\pi}{2}$ as $x \rightarrow \infty$.

4. In the fourth part of the paper, we shall study the properties of the function $k(x)$ defined by the equation

$$k(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^3}{1+t^2} dt, \quad (4)$$

where x is a real number. It is well known that this function is increasing and concave up on the interval $(-\infty, \infty)$. Moreover, it is easy to see that $k(x) \rightarrow 0$ as $x \rightarrow -\infty$ and $k(x) \rightarrow \frac{\pi}{2}$ as $x \rightarrow \infty$.

5. In the fifth part of the paper, we shall study the properties of the function $l(x)$ defined by the equation

$$l(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^4}{1+t^2} dt, \quad (5)$$

where x is a real number. It is well known that this function is increasing and concave down on the interval $(-\infty, \infty)$. Moreover, it is easy to see that $l(x) \rightarrow 0$ as $x \rightarrow -\infty$ and $l(x) \rightarrow \frac{\pi}{2}$ as $x \rightarrow \infty$.

